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NOTES

OF A

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE

IN THE

HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORY.

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BY JOHN M'LEAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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NOTES

OF A

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' SERVICE

IN THE

HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORY.

CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY TO NORWAY HOUSE.

I STARTED from Stuart's Lake on the 22d of February, and arrived at Fort Alexandria on the 8th of March. Although the upper parts of the district were yet buried in snow, it had disappeared in the immediate neighbourhood of the establishment, and everything wore the pleasing aspect of spring.

Mr. F—— was about to remove to a new post he had erected on the west bank of the river. Horses were provided for us to perform the journey overland to Okanagan. We left on the 13th; on the 15th we encamped on the borders of Lac Vèrt, having experienced a violent snow-storm in the early part of the day. The lake and circumjacent country presented a beautiful scene; the spurs of the Rocky Mountains bounding the horizon and presenting a rugged outline enveloped in snow—the intervening space of wooded hill and dale clothed in the fresh verdure of the season; and the innumerable low points and islands in the lake contributing to the variety of the landscape.

Hitherto we had found much snow on the ground, and our progress in consequence was very slow. Our hardy horses subsisting on whatever they could pick during the night, or when we halted for our meals, began to falter, so that we were under the necessity of stopping to allow them to feed wherever any bare ground appeared.

On the evening of the 18th we came in sight of Kamloops' Lake, which, to my great surprise,

was not only clear of ice, but the valley in which it is situated appeared clothed with verdure, while the heights on the other side were still covered with snow. The valley looks to the south, and is protected from the cold winds by the neighbouring high grounds.

On arriving at Kamloops' post we found two Canadians in charge, Mr. B—— having set off a few days before for the dépôt at Fort Vancouver. We met with a cordial reception from his men, who entertained us with horse-flesh and potatoes for supper; and next day we bountifully partook of the same delicacies, my prejudice against this fare having completely vanished.

Fort Kamloops is situated at the confluence of Thompson's River and its north branch; the Indians attached to it are a tribe of the Atnahs. Their lands are now destitute of fur-bearing animals, nor are there many animals of the larger kind to be found; they however find subsistence in the variety of edible roots which the country affords. They have the character of being honest, quiet, and well-disposed towards the whites. As

soon as the young women attain the age of puberty, they paint their faces after a fashion which the young men understand without explanation. They also dig holes in the ground, which they inlay with grass or branches, as a proof of their industry; and when they are in a certain state they separate from the community and live in small huts, which they build for themselves. Should any one unwittingly touch them, or an article belonging to them, during their indisposition, he is considered unclean; and must purify himself by fasting for a day, and then jumping over a fire prepared by *pure* hands.

We left Kamloops on the 20th, and after travelling about twenty miles found the ground covered with snow, which increased in depth as we advanced. The track left by Mr. B——'s party was of great service to us.

We encamped at the extremity of Okanagan Lake, where we found a small camp of natives nearly starved to death; the unfortunate creatures passed the night in our encampment, and we distributed as much of our provisions amongst them

as we could possibly spare. This encampment afforded me as miserable a night's lodging as I had ever met with; a snow-storm raged without intermission till daylight, when we set out so completely benumbed that we could not mount our horses till we had put the blood in circulation by walking.

We overtook Mr. B—— on the 25th, his horses completely jaded and worn out by the fatigues of the journey; the great depth of the snow indeed would have utterly precluded travelling had he not adopted the precaution of driving a number of young horses before the loaded horses to make a track.

The country through which we have travelled for the last few days is exceedingly rugged, and possesses few features to interest the traveller.

We arrived at the post of Okanagan on the 28th, situated on the left bank of the Columbia River. The ground was still covered with snow to the depth of two feet, and had been five feet deep in the course of the winter—an extraordinary

circumstance, as there generally falls so little snow in this quarter, that the cattle graze in the plain nearly all winter. The Indians are designated Okanágans, and speak a dialect of the Atnah. Their lands are very poor, yielding only cats, foxes, &c.; they subsist on salmon and roots.

Messrs. F—— and D—— arrived from Fort Vancouver on the 7th of April, and we embarked on the 8th in three boats manned by retiring servants. Mr. B—— accompanied us, having obtained permission to cross the Rocky Mountains.

We arrived at Colville on the 12th, where we met with a most friendly reception from a warm-hearted Gael, (Mr. McD.) The gentlemen proceeding to the dépôt in charge of the accounts of the Columbia department generally remain here a few days to put a finishing hand to these accounts—an operation which occupied us till the 22d, when we re-embarked, leaving Messrs. D—— and B—— behind; the former being remanded to Fort Vancouver; and the latter, having changed his mind, in an evil hour for

himself, returned to his old quarters; where he was murdered sometime afterwards by an Indian who had lost his father, and thought that the company of his old trader would solace him for the absence of his children.

CHAPTER II.

ARRIVAL AT YORK FACTORY—ITS SITUATION — CLIMATE — NATIVES—REIN-DEER—VOYAGE TO UNGAVA—INCIDENTS OF THE VOYAGE — ARRIVAL AT UNGAVA — SITUATION AND ASPECT.

I ARRIVED at York Factory, the dépôt of the Northern department, early in July. This establishment presents a more respectable appearance than any other that I have seen in Rupert's Land, and reflects no small credit on the talents and taste of him who planned, and partly executed, the existing improvements, all which have been effected since the coalition. When Mr. McT. first assumed the command, the buildings were of the most wretched description—the apartments had more the appearance of cells for criminals, than of rooms for gentlemen.

The yielding nature of the swampy ground on which the buildings were to be erected rendering it necessary to lay a solid foundation, the object was accomplished in the face of every difficulty, and at a great expense; and the present commodious buildings were commenced, but not finished by the projector. Other improvements have been made since then, so that they afford every comfort and convenience that could be expected in so unfavourable a situation.

The dépôt is at present under the charge of a chief factor, assisted by a chief trader, a surgeon, and two clerks. Here there is always a sufficient supply of goods and provisions on hand to meet the demand of the trade for two years—a wise precaution, as in the event of any accident happening to prevent the vessel from reaching her destination, the trade would not be interrupted. The very emergency thus provided for occurred last autumn; the ship, after dropping anchor in her usual mooring ground, was compelled by stress of weather to bear away for England, after loosing her anchors, and sustaining other serious

damages. Yet notwithstanding this untoward event, the gentlemen in charge of the different districts set off for the interior with their outfits complete.

The climate, although extremely disagreeable, is not considered unhealthy. In summer the extremes of heat and cold are experienced in the course of a few hours; in the morning you may be wearing nankeen, and before noon, duffle. Were the heat to continue for a sufficient length of time to thaw the ground thoroughly, the establishment could not be kept up save at a great sacrifice of life, through the mephitic exhalations from the surrounding swamps. The ground, however, seldom thaws more than eighteen inches, and the climate therefore is never affected by them to such a degree as to become unhealthy.

One of Mr. McT——'s most beneficial improvements was to clear the swamps surrounding the factory of the brushwood with which they were thickly covered; and the inmates are now in a great measure relieved from the torture to which they were formerly exposed from the mosquitoes.

These vampires are not so troublesome in the cleared ground, but whoever dares to intrude on their domain pays dearly for his temerity. Every exposed part of the body is immediately covered with them; defence is out of the question; the death of one is avenged by the stings of a thousand equally bloodthirsty; and the unequal contest is soon ended by the flight of the tormented party to his quarters, whither he is pursued to his very door.

There seems to be no foundation for the opinion generally entertained that the natives do not suffer from the stings of these insects. The incrustation of filth with which their bodies are covered undoubtedly affords some protection, the skin not being so easily pierced; but no incrustation, however thick, can be a defence against the attacks of myriads; and in fact, the natives complain as loudly of the mosquitoes as the whites.

The Indians of this quarter are denominated Swampies, a tribe of the Cree nation, whose language they speak with but little variation, and in their manners and customs there is a great

similarity. But the Swampies are a degenerate race, reduced by famine and disease to a few families; and these have been still farther reduced by an epidemic which raged among them this summer. They were attacked by it immediately on their return from the interior with the produce of their winter hunts, and remained in hopes of being benefited by medical advice and attendance. Their hopes, however, were not realized; they were left entirely in charge of a young man without experience and without humanity; and the disease was unchecked. Every day the death of some poor wretch was made known to us by the firing of guns, by which the survivors fancied the evil spirit was frightened away from the souls of their departed friends.

Not many years ago this part of the country was periodically visited by immense herds of rein-deer; at present there is scarcely one to be found. Whether their disappearance is owing to their having changed the course of their migrations, or to their destruction by the natives, who waylaid them on their passage, and killed

them by hundreds, is a question not easily determined. It may be they have only forsaken this part of the country for a time, and may yet return in as great numbers as ever: be that as it may, the present want to which the Indians are subject, arises from the extreme scarcity of those animals, whose flesh and skins afforded them food and clothing. Their subsistence is now very precarious; derived principally from snaring rabbits and fishing; and rabbits also fail periodically.

Their fare during summer, however, soon obliterates the remembrance of the privations of winter: fish is then found in every lake, and wild-fowl during the moulting season become an easy prey; while young ducks and geese are approached in canoes, and are destroyed with arrows in great numbers, ere they have acquired the use of their wings. The white man similarly situated would undoubtedly think of the long winter he had passed in want, and would provide for the next while he could;—so much foresight,

however, does not belong to the Indian character.

Fishing and hunting for the establishment affords employment to a few Indians during summer, and is an object of competition among them, on account of the incomparable gratification it affords—grog drinking—to which no earthly bliss can be compared in the Indian's estimation. To find the Company serving out rum to the natives as payment for their services in this remote quarter, created the utmost surprise in my mind: no excuse can be advanced which can justify the unhallowed practice, when the management of the native population is left entirely to themselves. Why then is it continued? Strange to say, while Indians were to be seen rolling drunk about the establishment, an order of Council appeared, prohibiting the sale of ardent spirits in any quantity exceeding two gallons to the Company's officers of whatever rank, with the view of preventing the demoralization of the natives!

Most of the natives have a smattering of English, and are said to be a quiet, harmless race, addicted to few bad habits. Their remote situation and impoverished country protect them from the hostile inroads of neighbouring tribes; hence the tame and pacific demeanour by which they are distinguished. The poor Swampy often retires to rest without a morsel to eat for himself or family, and that for days together; yet he is under no apprehension from his enemies, and enjoys his night's rest undisturbed; whereas, the warrior of the plain, while he revels in abundance, seldom retires to rest without apprehension; the hostile yell may, in fact, rouse him from his midnight slumber, either to be butchered himself, or to hear the dying groans of his family while he escapes. Thus chequered is the life of man with good and evil in every condition, whether civilized or savage.

Every preparation for our departure being now completed, I took leave of Fort York, its fogs, and bogs, and mosquitoes, with little regret.

We embarked on the 22d of August, in a brig that had fortunately escaped the mishaps of the other vessels last autumn; and after being delayed in port by adverse winds till the 26th, we finally stood out to sea, having spoken the Prince Rupert just come in. The fields of ice, that had been observed a few days previously, having now entirely disappeared, the captain concluded that the passage was clear for him, and accordingly steered for the south. He had not proceeded far in this direction, however, when we fell in with such quantities of ice as to interrupt our passage; but we still continued to force our way through. Convinced at length of the futility of the attempt, we altered our course to a directly opposite point, standing to the north, until we came abreast of Churchill, and then bore away for the strait, making Mansfield Island on the 7th of September. We encountered much stream ice on our passage, from which no material injury was sustained; although the continual knocking of our rather frail vessel against the ice created

a good deal of alarm, from the effect the collision produced, shaking her violently from stem to stern.

We were thus passing rapidly through the straits without experiencing any accident worthy of notice, when I inquired of our captain, one evening, how soon he expected to make the Island of Akpatok. He replied, "To-morrow morning about nine o'clock." We retired to rest about ten, P.M., and I had not yet fallen asleep, when I heard an unusual bustle on deck, and one of the men rushing down to the captain's room to call him up. I instantly dressed and went on deck, where I soon learned the cause;—a dark object, scarcely distinguishable through the fog and gloom of night, was pointed out to me on our lee beam, two cable-lengths distant, on which we had been rushing, propelled by wind and current, at the rate of thirteen knots an hour, when it was observed. A few moments more, and we had been launched into eternity. Had the vigilance of the look-out been relaxed for a minute, or had the slightest accident occurred

to prevent the vessel from wearing at the very instant, our doom was certain.

The western extremity of the Island of Akpatok, terminating in a high promontory seemingly cut down perpendicular to the water's edge, formed the danger we had so providentially escaped. Next day we saw the dismal spot in all its horrors. The island was still partially covered with snow, and no traces of vegetation were discernible; but a fresh breeze springing up we soon lost sight of this desolate spot, and made the mouth of the Ungava, or South River, about an hour after sunset. The captain was a perfect stranger on the coast, and had but a very imperfect chart to guide him; he nevertheless stood boldly in for the land, and fortunately discovered the mouth of the river, which we entered as darkness closed in upon us.

By this time the breeze, that had carried us on so rapidly, increased to a gale, so that if we had not entered the river so opportunely, the consequences might have been serious. We were utterly unacquainted with the coast, which pre-

sented a thousand dangers in the shape of rocks and breakers, that were observable in every direction, as far as the eye could reach to seaward; we therefore congratulated ourselves on our fancied security—for it was only fancied, as will presently appear. We kept firing as we approached the land, with the view of apprizing the people of the post, who were directed to await us at the mouth of the river. No sound was heard in reply until we had advanced a few miles up the river, when we were gratified with hearing the report of muskets, and presently several torches were visible blazing a little ahead.

The night was uncommonly dark, the banks of the river being scarcely perceptible; and although it appeared to me we were much nearer then than prudence would warrant, we still drew nearer, when our progress was suddenly arrested. The vessel struck violently on a sunken rock, and heeled over so much that she was nearly thrown on her beam-ends. Swinging round, however, with the force of the current, she soon got off again;

and our captain, taking the hint, instantly dropped anchor. Soon after a couple of Esquimaux came alongside in their canoes, who gave us to understand by signs that they were sent to pilot us to the post.

Next day, as soon as the tide proved favourable, our Esquimaux made signs to weigh anchor, which being done, one of them took his station by the side of the helmsman, and never moved a moment from the spot, pointing out the deep channel, with which he appeared well acquainted; although the utmost anxiety appeared depicted in his countenance, lest any accident should happen. Once or twice we touched slightly, when he expressed his dissatisfaction by a deep groan; he managed so well, however, that he brought us to good anchoring ground ere nightfall. From 10 A.M. until late in the evening we had only advanced twenty-five miles, although we pressed against the current with top-gallant sails set and a strong wind in our favour.

Immediately we anchored, Captain Humphrey

and myself determined on rowing up to the post, where we arrived about four, P.M. I need scarcely say with what joy our arrival was hailed by people so seldom visited by strangers, in a situation which had no regular communication as yet with any other part of the world.

I was much gratified by the appearance of every thing about the establishment. The buildings had just been finished with materials sent out from England, through the considerate and kindly feeling of the Committee, whose compassion had been excited by the accounts they had heard of the miserable hovels in which the people were lodged when the place was first settled. After passing an hour or two examining the fort, (as it is called *par excellence*,) we returned to the ship, and weighing anchor at an early hour the next morning, (11th September,) we were soon brought up to the establishment, and landed without loss of time amid a violent snow-storm. It afforded us no small consolation, however, to reflect that we had no further cause to apprehend danger from

icebergs or rocks, and that the post afforded us greater comfort as to living and accommodation than we had been led to expect.

The vessel, having discharged cargo, dropped down with the stream on the 15th, leaving us to reflect in undisturbed solitude on the dreary prospects before us. The clank of the capstan, while the operation of weighing was being executed, echoing from the surrounding hills, suggested the question, "When shall that sound be heard again?" From the melancholy reverie which this idea suggested I was roused by the voice of my fellow exile, "the companion of my joys and sorrows," in whose society such gloomy thoughts could not long dwell.

This post is situated in lat. 59° 28′, standing on the east bank of South River, about thirty miles distant from the sea, surrounded by a country that presents as complete a picture of desolation as can be imagined; moss-covered rocks without vegetation and without verdure, constitute the cheerless landscape that greets the

eye in every direction. A few stunted pines growing in the villages form the only exception; and at this season of the year, when they shed their leaves, contribute but little to the improvement of the scene.

CHAPTER III.

EXPLORING EXPEDITION THROUGH THE INTERIOR OF LABRADOR— DIFFICULTIES — DEER-HUNT — INDIAN GLUTTONY— DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY—PROVISIONS RUN SHORT— INFLUENZA.

THE Company having learned, through a pamphlet published by the Moravian missionaries of Labrador, that the country produced excellent furs, were induced by the laudable desire of "ameliorating the condition of the natives," to settle it; and a party was accordingly sent overland from Moose Factory to take possession in the summer of 1831. The Moravians, finding their intention thus anticipated, left both the cure of souls and trade of furs to the Company.

Whatever may have been the Company's real motives in forming a settlement in this quarter,

the profits derived from it added but little to the dividends; the substance that glittered at a distance like gold proved to be but base metal. Beavers were nowhere to be found; and although the martens brought an extraordinary high price, they were far from plentiful; while the enormous expense of supplying the district by sea, and supporting it on imported provisions, rendered the "Ungava adventure" a subject of rather unpleasant discussion among the partners, most of whom were opposed to the measure from the first.

Mr. Simpson was, in fact, the prime mover of the project, and aware of the discontent caused by its failure, determined on making every effort to reduce the expense, and, if possible, to increase the returns. Accordingly, I was directed to push outposts into the interior, to support my people on the resources of the country, and at the same time to open a communication with Esquimaux Bay, on the coast of Labrador, with the view of obtaining in future my supplies from thence by inland route; "there being no question of the practicability of the rivers." So said not he who had seen those rivers.

Mr. Erlandson had traversed the country in the spring of 1834, and represented to me the utter impossibility of carrying my instructions into effect. Meantime, the Committee, having learned by despatches from York Factory that the vessel intended for the business of the district had been lost, and the other, in which I made my passage, placed in so critical a situation as to render her safety in spring a very doubtful matter, considered it advisable to provide for the worst by freighting a small schooner to carry us out our supplies. This vessel very unexpectedly made her appearance on the 22d of September, and we thus found ourselves supplied with goods and provisions for two years' consumption.

Having, as above mentioned, learned from Mr. Erlandson the difficulties of the inland route, and also that a great number of the natives had gone to Esquimaux Bay, with the intention of remaining there, I considered it incumbent upon me to visit that quarter at an early period of the winter, and I accordingly set out from Fort Chimo on the 2d of January. I submit the following narrative of my journey to the reader.

"*Tuesday, the 2d of January,* 1838.—I left Fort Chimo at eleven A.M., accompanied by the following men, *viz.* :—

"Donald Henderson, Henry Hay, and two Indian guides, who are to accompany me throughout the journey; Pierre Neven and M. Ferguson go part of the way, each driving a sled of two dogs, loaded with provisions, the other men having sleds drawn by themselves.

"*Wednesday, the 3d.*—Left our encampment before dawn of day. Excessively cold—some of us got frost-bitten, but not severely. Our principal guide, finding his companion unable to keep up with us, set off to his lodge in quest of a substitute. Encamped early, having proceeded about nine miles.

"*Thursday, the 4th.*—Started at seven A.M. Reached High Fall Creek at nine A.M. Halted to wait for our guide, who soon joined us, alone, finding no person willing to accompany him. Resumed our march at half-past nine; had not proceeded far, when we perceived that our young guide, Pellican, was left considerably in the rear.

We waited till he overtook us, and the miserable creature appearing completely exhausted with fatigue, we encamped at an early hour. Eight miles.

"*Friday, the 5th.*—Lightened Pellican's sled, and set off at five A.M.; fine weather, though sharp. Advanced sixteen miles.

"*Saturday, the 6th.*—As the ice was covered with water close to our encampment, it was deemed advisable to await the light of day. Set off at eight A.M., but found it impossible to move forward in consequence of the immense quantity of snow that had fallen during the night. It continuing still to snow, and blowing a violent gale at same time, I gave up the struggle. Advanced about a mile.

"*Sunday, the 7th.*—Got up about three A.M., literally buried in snow. Our blankets being wet, we waited in our encampment drying them till eight o'clock, when we started with only half loads, with which we intended to proceed to the first lake, and then return for the remainder; but to our great satisfaction we soon discovered that the tempest which had incommoded us so much.

last night had cleared the ice of snow; we therefore returned for the property we had left; then proceeding at a fine rate, having beautiful weather, we soon reached the lake; when my guides, discovering a herd of deer on an adjacent hill, immediately set off at a bound, followed by Pellican and my two *brules*. I saw at once my day's journey was at an end, and accordingly directed my encampment to be made. Our hunters joined us in the evening with the choice parts of three deer they had killed. Proceeded eight miles.

"*Monday, the 8th.*—Very cold, tempestuous weather. Our progress was much retarded by the great depth of snow in the woods through which our route lay. Thirteen miles.

"*Tuesday, the 9th.*—Blowing a hurricane; the cold being also intense, we could not venture out on the ice without incurring the risk of being frost-bitten; we therefore remained in our quarters, such as they were, until the weather should moderate.

"*Wednesday, the 10th.*—My guides appeared very unwilling to quit their encampment this morning, pretending indisposition. They might

have been really ill; but the beastly manner in which they had been gorging themselves for the past two days being well known to be the cause of their illness, no one felt disposed to pity them. I therefore sprang into their encampment, and pitching the remainder of their choice morsels into the snow, drove them out before me. Travelled through woods the whole day. Encamped at half-past three. Eighteen miles.

"*Thursday, the* 11*th.*—Started at five, A.M. Soon fell on a large lake, on which we travelled till three, P.M., when we encamped. Thus far the lake extends S.E. and N.W., being about two miles in width. As Mr. Erlandson was the first European who had traversed these inhospitable wilds, I had the gratification of giving his name to the lake. It is reported by the natives to abound in fish of the best quality; rein-deer are also said to be numerous at certain seasons of the year. Proceeded fifteen miles.

Friday, the 12*th.*—Being immoderately cold, and the wind blowing direct in our faces, we could not attempt travelling on the lake.

"*Saturday, the* 13*th.*—Weather fine. Left

Erlandson's Lake about one, A.M.; it still stretched out before us as far as the eye could reach, and cannot be less than forty miles in length; its medium breadth, however, does not exceed two miles and a half. The circumjacent country is remarkably well wooded, even to the tops of the highest hills, and is reported by the natives to abound in martens. A few industrious Indians would not fail to turn such advantages to good account; but they can avail the Company very little, while the natives alone are in possession of them. Went on twenty-four miles.

"*Sunday, the* 14*th.*—Set off at five, A.M. Passed over several small lakes; the country well wooded. Entered upon a small river about noon, the banks covered with large pine. Encamped at three, P.M. Advanced sixteen miles.

"*Monday, the* 15*th.*—Took our departure at seven, A.M. Travelled without halting the whole day. Eighteen miles.

"*Tuesday, the* 16*th.*—Decamped at five, A.M.; the snow very deep in the woods. Fell on Whale River at ten, A.M. The face of the country

presents scarcely any variety; from Erlandson's Lake to this river it is generally well wooded, but afterwards becomes extremely barren, nothing to be seen on both sides of the river but bare rocks. Proceeded sixteen miles.

"*Wednesday, the* 17*th.*—Started at five, A.M. Our route in the morning led us through a chain of small lakes, and brought us out again on Whale River, on which we travelled till four, P.M. The appearance of the country much the same as described yesterday. Proceeded eighteen miles.

"*Thursday, the* 18*th.*—P. Neven being unable to travel from indisposition, I resolved on passing the day to await the issue, deeming his malady to be of no very serious nature. In the mean-time I took an exact account of my provisions which I found to be so far reduced, that no further assistance was required for its conveyance. I accordingly made the necessary arrangements to send the men back.

"*Friday, the* 19*th.*—Early in the morning, P. Neven (being now convalescent) and Mordoch

Ferguson set off on their return, whilst I and my party proceeded on our onward route. I retained a sled of dogs, intending to drive them myself. We travelled eleven miles on Whale River, then struck across the country to the eastward. Encamped at four, P.M. Fourteen miles.

"*Saturday, the 20th.*—The moon affording no longer light to find our way in the night, we must now wait till daylight. Started at seven A.M.; crossed a point of wood, chiefly larch, of a miserably small growth; then came out on a large lake (comparatively speaking), on which we travelled till four, P.M. Thirteen miles.

"*Sunday, the 21st.*—Set off at seven A.M. About eleven, we fell on the fresh tracks of a large herd of deer, which my guides carefully examined; their experience not only enabling them to determine the precise time they had passed, but the very spot where they were likely to be found, which they affirmed was close to us. My dogs being very much reduced, and not having the means of increasing their present modicum of food, I determined on availing my-

self of an opportunity which might not again occur of procuring a supply. The Indians accordingly set off in quest of them, desiring us at their departure to make no fire until the sun had reached a certain position in the heavens which they pointed out to us. We made our encampment at the time appointed, and were soon joined by our hunters, dragging after them a fine doe; they had got only one shot at the herd, which immediately took to the bare hills, where pursuit was in vain. Our guides being encamped by themselves, I was curious to ascertain by ocular evidence the manner in which the first kettle would be disposed of, nor did I wait long till my curiosity was gratified. The cannibals fell upon the half-cooked flesh with a voracity which I could not have believed even savages capable of; and in an incredibly short space of time the kettle was disposed of;—and this, too, after their usual daily allowance, which is equal to, and sometimes exceeds, that of the other men, who say they have enough. Proceeded seven miles.

"*Monday, the 22d.*—On examining the remains

of the deer this morning, I found my quadrupeds would benefit but little by my good intentions and loss of time, our guides having applied themselves so sedulously to the doe during the night, as to leave but little for their canine brethren. We started at seven, A.M., the travelling very heavy in the woods. About noon we came upon a large lake, where we made better speed. Thirteen miles.

"*Tuesday, the 23d.*—Travelled through woods the greater part of the day; encamped at four o'clock. Sixteen miles.

"*Wednesday, the 24th.*—Decamped at seven, A.M. Our route lay through swamps and small lakes, with strips of wood intervening. Martens appear to be numerous, but beavers must be extremely rare, for we have discovered no traces whatever of their existence anywhere along our route, though innumerable small lakes and rivers, such as beavers frequent, are to be met with in every direction; but the country produces no food for them. At ten A.M. we arrived at a considerable lake, where my guides told me we had reached the highest land. On asking them if this were

the lake where we intended to build, they pointed to the south-west, saying it was four days' journey off in that direction!—so far had I been led from the route I intended to have followed, notwithstanding the perfect understanding I had with my perfidious guides prior to our departure from the establishment. Encamped at three, P.M. Twelve miles.

"*Thursday, the 25th.*—Immediately on leaving our encampment, we fell on a large river flowing to the north-east, which I took to be George's River. We followed it for a short distance, and then directed our course over bare hills. Encamped at three, P.M. Eleven miles.

"*Friday, the 26th.*—Having passed the night in a clump of small pines, which sheltered us from the inclemency of the weather, we were not aware of the violence of the storm which was raging round us, until, pursuing our route over a ridge of bare hills, we were completely exposed to its fury. We found the cold intense, the wind blowing in our faces, so that it was impossible to proceed. Observing a hummock of wood close

to us, we shaped our course for it, where we were no sooner arrived, than it began to snow and drift. The few trees to which we had retreated being far apart, and the wind blowing with the utmost violence, we experienced the greatest difficulty in clearing an encampment. The storm continuing unabated, we passed a miserable day in our snow burrow. Two miles.

"*Saturday, the 27th.*—Arose from our comfortless *couché* at half-past four. The snow having drifted over us, and being melted by the heat of the fire in the early part of the night, we found our blankets and capotes hard frozen in the morning. Thawing and drying them occupied us till nine A.M., when we set off. Snow very deep. Proceeded nine miles.

"*Sunday, the 28th.* — Set off at seven, A.M. Snow still increasing in depth, and our progress decreasing in proportion. At one, P.M., we came upon a large river flowing to the north, on which we travelled a short distance; then followed the course of a small stream running in an easterly direction. Leaving this stream, our

route lay over marshes and small lakes; the country flat, yielding dwarf pine intermixed with larch. Encamped at half-past four; advanced eight miles.

"*Monday, the 29th.*—Started at seven. Appearance of the country much the same as yesterday. Fifteen miles.

"*Tuesday, the 30th.*—Decamped at seven. Weather mild, and walking heavy. Our principal guide appears rapidly declining in strength, which does not surprise me, considering the laborious duty he has had to perform; always beating the track a-head, without being once relieved by his worthless associate. Fourteen miles.

"*Wednesday, the 31st.*—Started at seven. Still very mild. Observed a few small birch trees. Encamped at four, P.M. Fifteen miles.

Thursday, the 1st of February.—Started at the usual hour. We have been travelling through a very rough country for these two days past. The fact is, that our guides, having only passed here in summer, are unacquainted with the winter track. We are, therefore, evidently pursuing a

circuitous course, which, with every other disadvantage, subjects us to the risk of running short of provisions,—a contingency which our reduced stock warns us to prepare for ere long. We can afford no more food to the dogs; their load is now transferred to the men's sleds. Fifteen miles.

"*Friday, the 2d.*—Decamped at seven, A.M. Pursued our route over extensive swamps and small lakes, where there is scarcely any wood to be seen. The face of the surrounding country being level, the least elevation commands a most extensive view; but the eye turns away in disgust from the cheerless prospect which the desolate flats present. I deemed it expedient to curtail our allowance of provisions this evening. Eighteen miles.

"*Saturday, the 3d.*—Set off at seven, A.M. Reached Michigama Lake at one, P.M.; on which we travelled till five o'clock, when we encamped on an island. Proceeded twenty miles.

"*Sunday, the 4th.*—Left our encampment at the usual hour. Halted for our scanty meal at

ten, A.M. After an hour's delay we resumed our march, and encamped at four, P.M., on an island near the mainland on the east side of the lake, having performed about twenty miles. I here repeated to the Indians my earnest wish to proceed to Esquimaux Bay, by North River, which takes its rise in this lake. They replied that nothing could induce them to comply with my wishes, as inevitable starvation would be the consequence; no game could be found by the way, and we would have, therefore, to depend solely on our own provisions, which were barely sufficient for the shortest route. I had thus the mortification to find, that I should entirely fail in accomplishing the main object I had in view in crossing the country.

Monday, the 5th.—Decamped at seven, A.M. Reached the mainland at half-past eight; then ascended a river flowing from the north-east, which discharges itself into Michigama Lake, Pellican taking the lead, being the only one acquainted with this part of the country. The Indians shot an otter. No wood to be seen,

but miserably small pine, thinly scattered over the country. Encamped at Gull Lake. Fifteen miles.

"*Tuesday, the 6th.*—Left our encampment at seven. Our guide lost his way about noon, which after an hour's search, he succeeded in finding; when we resumed our slow march, Pellican proceeding at a snail's pace, which neither threats nor entreaties could in the least accelerate. Encamped at five, P.M. Eleven miles.

"*Wednesday, the 7th.*—Started at half-past six, A.M. Arrived at the site of an extensive Indian camp, which appeared to have been recently occupied. Our guides knowing the Indians to be their friends from Ungava, and their trail leading in the direction of our route, required no longer to be urged on. An immediate impulse was given to Pellican's sluggish motions, increasing his speed to such a degree, that it required our utmost exertions to keep up with him. Encamped near a high fall on North-West River, which is here walled in by inaccessible precipices

on both sides. The view above the fall is interrupted by stupendous rocks; the natives say that the appearance of the river and surrounding country is the same from this fall to Michigama Lake; the river is deemed to be impracticable for any kind of craft. Eighteen miles.

"*Thursday, the 8th.*—Set off at seven, A.M. Fine travelling on the river. We passed two portages and rapids. Encamped at forty-five minutes past five. Twenty miles.

"*Friday, the 9th.*—Decamped at seven. Travelling good; the banks of the river high and precipitous, and almost destitute of wood. We observed, however, a few birches. Encamped at six, P.M. Twenty miles.

"*Saturday, the 10th.* — Started at eight, A.M. About noon we arrived at a wide expansion of the river, where it suddenly bends to the west. Here we again quitted the river, directing our course to the eastward. The navigation of this part of the river is represented by the natives to be impracticable, and similar to the upper

part. Our snow-shoes being the worse for wear, we encamped at an early hour for the purpose of repairing them. Advanced fifteen miles.

"*Sunday, the* 11*th.*—Decamped at seven, A.M. Pursued our course through the roughest country I ever travelled. The appearance of it struck me as resembling the ocean when agitated by a storm, supposing its billows transformed into solid rock. We commenced ascending and descending in the morning, and kept at it till night. The men complained much of fatigue. Proceeded fourteen miles.

"*Monday, the* 12*th.*—The weather being so much overcast that we could not find our way, we remained in our encampment till eight, A.M. Encamped at a quarter past five. Fifteen miles.

"*Tuesday, the* 13*th.*—Set off at half-past seven, amidst a tremendous snow-storm, which continued without intermission the whole day; we sunk knee-deep in the snow, and found it not the most pleasant recreation in the world. About noon we passed a hut, which my guide told me had been the residence of a trader, two years ago. Late in

the evening we arrived at another hut, on North West River, where we found two of Mr. McGillivray's people, who were stationed there for the purpose of trapping martens. Nine miles.

"*Wednesday, the* 14*th.*—The weather being unpropitious, and finding ourselves very snug in our present quarters, we passed the day enjoying the comfort of a roof.

"*Thursday, the* 15*th.*—Left our Canadian hosts at early dawn; the snow very deep on the river. Proceeded till ten, A.M., when D. Henderson was suddenly seized by a violent fit, which completely incapacitated him from travelling. Discovering a hut close by, a fire was immediately kindled in it, and a place prepared for our invalid to lie down; in our present circumstances nothing more could be done. I waited by him till two, P.M., then pursued my route, accompanied by the Indians, leaving H. Hay to take care of him. Accomplished fourteen miles.

"*Friday, the* 16*th.*—Set off at four, A.M. Arrived at dusk at Fort Smith, where, although I was well known, my Esquimaux dress and

long beard defied recognition, until I announced myself by name.

"*Saturday, the* 17*th.*—An Indian was despatched early in the morning, to meet my men with a supply of the north-west panacea, Turlington Balsam; and I was glad to see them arrive in the evening, more in want of food than medicine."

Two days after our arrival, all the Nascopie or Ungava Indians, at present residing in this part of the country, numbering seventy or eighty souls, came to the establishment, with the produce of their winter hunts. Mr. McGillivray and myself having come to an understanding regarding them, we both addressed them, representing to them the advantages they would derive from having posts so conveniently situated on their lands, &c. After some deliberation among themselves, they expressed their intention to be guided by our advice, and to return forthwith to their lands. Having sent off my despatches by Indian couriers, for Mashquaro, on the 3d of March, to be forwarded thence to Canada, *via* the Company's posts along the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, I sent H. Hay

for my guides (who had gone to pay the *kettles* of their friends a visit), preparatory to my departure hence, which has been deferred to a much later period than I had calculated upon, from the prevalence of excessively bad weather for a fortnight.

Hay, having met the Indians on the way, returned the same evening; but they were so emaciated that I could scarcely recognise them, looking like so many spectres—a metamorphosis caused by the influenza, at that time prevalent in the country. My principal guide, however, declared himself able to proceed on the journey, with a light load; and it was arranged that Pellican should accompany his relative. Two young men, who came in with my guide, appearing not quite so much reduced as the others, I proposed to them to accompany me as far as Michigama Lake, to assist in hauling our provisions, which they consented to do; and they accordingly took their departure along with my guide, on the 4th of March. Myself and two men, along with my "husky" interpreter, followed next morning; but as we are to retrace our steps by the same way we came, it

will be unnecessary to narrate the occurrences of each day.

We arrived in the evening at the first Indian camp, where I found one of the young men I had hired, relapsed into his former malady, and unable to proceed further. This, although a disappointment, did not much affect me, as I had hopes my guide would be able to continue his route, from the circumstance of his having passed on to the farthest camp. When we arrived, about noon next day, and found, not only our guide, but every individual in the camp, suffering under the fatal malady,—this was the climax to my disappointment. I determined on returning to Fort Smith, with my guide, where, by proper treatment, I hoped he might yet recover in time to admit of my returning before the end of the season.

I accordingly returned, accompanied by H. Hay, who conducted the dog-sledge, on which I had placed my sick Indian, leaving D. Henderson in charge of the provisions, along with the Esquimaux. On the morning of the 9th, I despatched H. Hay to join Henderson, with directions to haul

the provisions on to McGillivray's hut, there to await further orders.

My guide, for a few days, appeared to be in a hopeless state, refusing sustenance of any kind, and became delirious. This was the crisis of the malady; for he soon began to take some food, and recovered strength daily. He at length proposed to attempt the journey, to which I joyfully assented; and once more took leave of Fort Smith, on the 19th of March, and joined my men next day.

Remaining two days, to give the guide time to recruit his strength, I started on the morning of the 23d; the Indians had recovered strength enough to enable them to proceed towards their winter deposit of provisions, near Michigama Lake, leaving us an excellent track. We overtook them on the 26th. I found it impossible to separate my guide from his relatives while we pursued the same route. We arrived on the 30th at their last stage, and encamped together.

Next morning as we were about to start, a message arrived from my guide, announcing his

determination to proceed no farther, unless Pelli-can were permitted to accompany us. I sent for him immediately, and endeavoured to impress on his mind the unreasonableness of such a propo-sition, our provisions being scarcely sufficient for ourselves—that it would expose the whole party to the risk of starvation; but I addressed a thing without reason and without understanding, and was accordingly obliged, once more, to yield.

We reached the highest land on the 2d of April, where, on examining our remaining stock of provisions, the alarming fact that it was altogether insufficient to carry us to the establishment, was but too apparent. It was therefore necessary to take immediate measures to avert, if possible, an evil that threatened so fearful consequences; and the only course that presented itself was to divide into two parties,—the one to proceed with all possible despatch to the fort, by the shortest route, and to send forward a supply to the other, which it was anticipated would reach them ere they were reduced to absolute want.

Pursuant to this resolution I set off, accom-

panied by the guide and H. Hay; leaving D. Henderson to make the best of his way, with the Esquimaux and Pellican. Having taken but a very small share of the provisions with us, and meeting with no game on the way, we were soon reduced to the utmost extremity. One of our dogs being starved to death, we were ultimately obliged to knock the surviving one on the head, to supply ourselves with what we considered, in present circumstances, "food for the gods." Such as it was, it enabled us to keep soul and body together till we reached Fort Chimo, on the 20th of April, where we found all the Nascopies of this part of the country assembled to greet the arrival of their long-expected friends—our guides. I immediately selected a couple of smart-looking lads to go to meet my rear-guard,—the other servants about the establishment, who were accustomed to snow-shoes, being absent, watching the deer.

On the third day after their departure the couriers returned, with Pellican. On inquiring of the latter what had become of my men, he

replied that he had left them encamped at a lake about sixty miles distant, where the Esquimaux, abandoning himself to despair, could not be prevailed upon to go a step farther; and that he (Pellican) had been sent forward by Henderson to urge on the party whom they expected. They were within a day's journey of them; and yet the wretches returned immediately on meeting Pellican, leaving the others to their fate. No Indians I had ever known would have acted so basely; yet these are an "unsophisticated race" of aborigines, who have but little intercourse with the whites, and must, of course, be free from the contamination of their manners. Our hunters being now arrived, were sent off, without delay, in quest of the missing; and I had the satisfaction to see my famished *compagnons de voyage* arrive, on the 26th of April.

CHAPTER IV.

DISTRESSING BEREAVEMENT — EXPLORING PARTY — THEIR REPORT — ARRIVAL OF ESQUIMAUX — ESTABLISH POSTS — POUNDING REIN-DEER — EXPEDITION UP GEORGE'S RIVER — ITS DIFFICULTIES — HAMILTON RIVER — DISCOVER A STUPENDOUS CATARACT — RETURN BY GEORGE'S RIVER TO THE SEA — SUDDEN STORM, AND MIRACULOUS ESCAPE.

HAVING thus ascertained the impracticability of the inland communication, I transmitted the result of my observations to the Governor—a report which, I doubt not, proved rather unpalatable to his Excellency, unaccustomed as he is to have any of his movements checked by that impudent and uncompromising word—impossible. I was much gratified to find that the deer-hunt had proved uncommonly successful; so that I had now the means of carrying into effect the

Governor's instructions on this point. On the approach of spring, preparations were made for establishing a post inland; guides were hired for the purpose, and every precaution taken to insure success.

At this time I was visited by a very grievous affliction, in the loss of my beloved wife, whose untimely death left me in a more wretched condition than words can express. This was truly an eventful year for me;—within that space I became a husband, a father, and a widower;—I traversed the continent of America, performing a voyage of some 1,500 miles by sea, and a journey by land of fully 1,200 miles, on snow-shoes.

As soon as the navigation became practicable (June 18), Mr. Erlandson set off for the interior, with his outfit, in three small canoes, and after much toil reached his destination on the 10th of July. On the return of the men who had assisted in the transport, I fitted out an expedition to explore the coast to the westward, with the view of ascertaining the capabilities of that quarter,

for the extension of the business. The party was absent about a month; and their report was entirely unfavourable to the project of carrying our ameliorating system so far. The navigation of the coast is exceedingly dangerous, from the continual presence of ice, and the extraordinary force of the currents. While the coast proved so inaccessible, the interior of the country wears a still more dreary and sterile aspect; not a tree, nor shrub, nor plant of any kind, is to be seen, save the lichens that cover the rocks, and a few willows. The native Esquimaux, whom our people had seen, evinced the same amicable disposition by which their whole race is distinguished. They received our people with open arms, and some of the young damsels seemed disposed to cultivate a closer intimacy with them than their ideas of propriety, or at least their olfactory nerves, would sanction. The effluvia that proceeds from their persons in the summer season is quite insufferable; it is as if you applied your nose to a cask of rancid oil.

In the course of the summer, several Esqui-

maux arrived from the westward, with a considerable quantity of fox-skins,—the only fur this barren country yields. Some of these poor creatures had passed nearly two years on their journey hither, being obliged to hunt or fish for their living as they travelled. They set off on their return with a little tobacco, or a few strings of beads;—very few having the means of procuring guns and ammunition.

Nothing worthy of notice occurred till the month of September, when I was gratified by the arrival of despatches from Canada, by a junior clerk appointed to the district. By him we received the first intelligence of the stirring events that had taken place in the colonies during the preceding year. The accounts of the triumphs of my countrymen's arms over French treachery and Yankee hatred, diverted my thoughts, for the first time, from the melancholy subject of my late bereavement; the thoughts of which my solitude served rather to cherish than dispel.

Having learned from the natives that a river fell into the bay, about eighty miles to the east-

ward, that offered greater facilities for carrying on the business in the interior than our present communication, I ordered the men who had assisted Mr. Erlandson, to descend by this river,—an enterprise which was successfully accomplished. Their report confirming that of the natives, I forthwith determined on establishing a post there; and the season being now far advanced, I had no sooner decided on the step than I set about carrying it into execution. A party was despatched with every requisite for the purpose, about the 15th of September; and I received a communication from them in October, informing me that they had discovered a convenient situation for erecting the buildings. The materials being found on the spot, and the men aware of the approach of winter, and straining every nerve to secure themselves against its rigours, the buildings, such as they were, were raised and already occupied.

In the early part of winter, being, I may say, entirely alone,—for there remained only one man and an interpreter with me,—I amused myself by

shooting partridges, which abounded in the neighbourhood that season; but the cold became so excessive as the winter advanced, that I was compelled to forego that amusement, and confine myself to the four walls of my prison, with the few books I possessed as my only companions. My despatches for the civilized world being completed, I was altogether at a loss how to forward them, as none of the natives could be induced, even by a high reward, to undertake the journey. At length one was found who consented to accompany one of my men to Mr. Erlandson's post, but no farther.

My couriers were absent six weeks, and I had the mortification to learn on their return that the packet remained at the outpost, owing to an accident that befel one of the Indian guides, and which incapacitated him for the trip. Our friends would thus remain in ignorance of our fate for nearly two years. The report received regarding the inland adventure proved very satisfactory as far as the trade was concerned; but the privations suffered by those engaged in it, it was painful to

learn; their sole subsistence consisted of fish, rendered extremely unpalatable from the damage it had sustained from the heat of the sun, and a few rabbits and partridges. Who would not be an Indian trader?

Early in the month of March the rein-deer made their appearance again, and every countenance brightened up at the thoughts of the approaching pastime. I fell on a plan, however, that divested the sport of much of its attractions, although calculated to ensure greater success. A favourable position being selected, a certain extent of ground was fenced in so as to form a "pound" of nearly a circular shape, a gap being left in it to admit the game from the river side. This done, I caused branches to be placed on the ice above and below the deer pass, which the animals observing, became alarmed, and running from side to side of the open space between the lines of branches, at length made a dash at the opposite side of the river, and entered the trap prepared for them at a gallop, continuing at the top of their speed until stopped by the upper

part of the pound, when they wheeled round, and making for the entrance, were received with a volley of balls from the huntsmen; a continual fire being kept up upon them in this manner until they all dropped.

The scene presented by the slaughter was anything but agreeable, yet stern necessity compelled me to continue the butchery; and the success that attended my scheme far exceeded my expectations. The first herd that entered, in number about fifty, burst through the fence; but our works were immediately strengthened, so as to defy their efforts in future to escape. A herd of 300 was soon after entrapped, and in the course of two hours all were killed.

Having thus obtained an ample stock of provisions, the different parties employed at the fishing and hunting stations were recalled, and preparations were begun for our summer campaign, in which I determined to take an active part. The favourable report of last summer respecting the East or George's River, combined with reports that had reached me since of another large river

flowing a short distance to the south of Esquimaux Bay, suggested the possibility of carrying on our business on this line of communication. With the view, therefore, of carrying this design into effect, I had a boat built in the course of the winter, in which I embarked with a strong crew on the 25th of June, the river not being clear of ice at an earlier period; and sweeping down on the top of the current at railroad speed, reached the sea in about three hours.

It being still early in the day, and no ice to be seen, we pulled for the opposite side of the bay, in the hope of reaching it ere dark. The weather being perfectly calm we advanced rapidly, and had proceeded about seven miles with every prospect of effecting our purpose, when lo! the tide was observed to be making against us; and the ice returning with it, apparently in a compact body, we were placed in rather a critical situation. The sun was declining, while the coast presented a solid wall of ice, which precluded the possibility of landing anywhere nearer than the mouth of South River.

Towards that point, therefore, the head of the boat was directed, and the crew, seeing the imminence of the danger, rowed with all their might; and by dint of strenuous exertions, we made good our landing ere the ice closed in around us. A few minutes after not a speck of water could be descried.

Next morning, the ice still covered the bay, leaving only a narrow strip of open water along the shore; into this channel we pushed our boat, and for some time made but little progress, being continually interrupted by pieces of ice, which the high tide detached from the shore. Our channel, however, soon widened, and in a short time not a particle of ice could be seen, disappearing as if by magic; for in a few minutes after it began to move, no traces of it could be discovered as far as the eye could reach to seaward. We reached East or George's River, without further interruption, on the 3d of July, where we were detained by unfavourable weather until the 5th.

The post established here last autumn is situ-

ated in a still more cheerless spot than Fort Chimo, being surrounded by rugged hills, whose sides are covered with the *débris* of rock, which appears to have been detached from the hills by the process of decay. The post stands at the foot of one of those frightful hills, while another rises immediately in front; the intervening valleys, or cavities, present nothing to enliven the scene, save a few stunted pines, and here and there a patch of snow.

The few Esquimaux who inhabit this region of sterility and desolation, at first appeared delighted with the idea of having whites among them: finding, however, that our presence yielded them no advantage, they soon became indifferent about us, and proceeded to the Moravian settlement with the produce of their hunts, where they obtained their little wants at a far cheaper rate than our tariff allowed.

My crew, leaving Fort Siviright, consisted of ten able men; and an Indian guide accompanied us in his canoe. As we ascended, our difficulties increased at every step, the water being

much lower than last year. I found myself engaged in a more laborious work than I had ever yet undertaken—towing the boat day after day against a current flowing in a continuous rapid, so as to admit of not one moment's relaxation, unless during the short interval allowed for rest to such as could take it—no easy matter when myriads of sand-flies and mosquitoes filled the air and tortured us incessantly.

We continued to advance in this manner, hauling, pulling, carrying, and even launching the boat for about fifteen days, when we reached an expansion of the river, without any perceptible current, and sufficiently deep to admit of the use of the oar.

Our labour was now supposed to be at an end by those who had explored the river; no further doubts were entertained as to our soon reaching Esquimaux Bay, where letters from our friends and news from all quarters would reward us for all our toils. Let not him who knows not what it is to be shut out from his friends, society, and the great world, year after year, think lightly

of the reward which the solitary trader, in his remote seclusion, values so highly. Our hopes, however, were soon dissipated. Having reached the upper extremity of the still water, we encountered difficulties that defied every attempt to surmount.

The lake just referred to proved to be the source of the lower stream; the rivulet that flowed into it from above being so shallow as scarcely to admit of the passage of a small canoe. It was therefore impossible to proceed with the boat, a circumstance that placed me in a rather perplexing position; for I had the outfit for the interior in charge, without which the business, so lately established, with every prospect of success, would fail.

There was, however, no time to be lost in vain regrets; the advanced period of the season required instant decision, and our stock of provisions was diminishing rapidly. I therefore determined on proceeding to the outpost in the small canoe belonging to our guide, taking two of the men with me, and leaving the rest of the crew to erect

a temporary post; and in the mean time sent my guide to apprize the Indians in the vicinity of the steps I had taken to supply their wants next winter.

These arrangements completed, I embarked in an eggshell of a canoe, so small as not to admit of anything save the smallest possible supply of provisions,—tent, basket, &c. remaining behind. Soon after leaving our encampment, we came to a portage some ten miles in length, and struck the river again, where, from the report of the men, I expected no further difficulties would impede our progress. But the event did not answer my expectations; from the continual drought of the season the water proved so low that we had to drag along our canoe, wading in the water, where a boat would have passed with ease last year. In this manner we continued our toilsome voyage without relaxation for several days, carrying our canoe and baggage overland, or wading in the water from early dawn until late at night, when we threw ourselves down on the ground to pass the night without shelter from the weather or

protection from the stings of our merciless persecutors the mosquitoes, who pursued their avocation with unwearied assiduity, so that our rest was small, and that little afforded us but scanty refreshment.

Our progress, but slow, from the difficulties of the route, was rendered still slower by our frequent deviations from our course, my guides having paid but little attention to their instructions last year. We at length reached the post on the 16th of August, half starved, half naked, and half devoured. A friendly reception, and the good cheer the place afforded, soon restored our spirits, if not our "inexpressibles;" and although much annoyed that no Indians could be induced to guide us to Esquimaux Bay, I determined on making the attempt with such assistance as Mr. Erlandson could give me, who was well acquainted with the upper part of the river.

After one day's rest, we embarked in a canoe sufficiently large to contain several conveniences, to which I had been for some time a stranger,—a tent to shelter us by night, and tea to cheer us

by day; we fared, too, like princes, on the produce of "sea and land," procured by the net and the gun. We thus proceeded gaily on our downward course, without meeting any interruption, or experiencing any difficulty in finding our way; when, one evening, the roar of a mighty cataract burst upon our ears, warning us that danger was at hand. We soon reached the spot, which presented to us one of the grandest spectacles in the world, but put an end to all hopes of success in our enterprise.

About six miles above the fall the river suddenly contracts, from a width of from four hundred to six hundred yards, to about one hundred yards; then rushing along in a continuous foaming rapid, finally contracts to a breadth of about fifty yards, ere it precipitates itself over the rock which forms the fall; when, still roaring and foaming, it continues its maddened course for about a distance of thirty miles, pent up between walls of rock that rise sometimes to the height of three hundred feet on either side. This stupendous fall exceeds in height the Falls of Nia-

gara, but bears no comparison to that sublime object in any other respect, being nearly hidden from the view by the abrupt angle which the rocks form immediately beneath it. If not seen, however, it is felt; such is the extraordinary force with which it tumbles into the abyss underneath, that we felt the solid rock shake under our feet, as we stood two hundred feet above the gulf. A dense cloud of vapour, which can be seen at a great distance in clear weather, hangs over the spot. From the fall to the foot of the rapid—a distance of thirty miles—the zigzag course of the river presents such sharp angles, that you see nothing of it until within a few yards of its banks. Might not this circumstance lead the geologist to the conclusion that the fall had receded this distance? The mind shrinks from the contemplation of a subject that carries it back to a period of time so very remote; for if the rock, syenite, always possessed its present solidity and hardness, the action of the water alone might require millions of years to produce such a result!

After carrying our canoe and baggage for a

whole day through bogs, and swamps, and windfalls, in the hope of finding the river accessible, we at length gave up the attempt; and with heavy hearts and weary limbs retracing our steps, we reached the outpost, without accident, after an absence of fifteen days. Finding it impossible to remove either the returns, or the small quantity of goods remaining on hand, I determined on leaving a couple of the men to pass the winter here; and Mr. Erlandson accompanied me to assume the charge of the temporary post, where I had left his outfit. Here we arrived on the 1st of September, and I was delighted at finding my men living in the midst of abundance;—the surrounding country apparently abounding with rein-deer, and the lake affording fish of the best quality. I remained with the men two days to expedite the buildings which were yet unfinished; and in the meantime a party of Indians arrived, whom we persuaded to carry our despatches to Esquimaux Bay.

After seeing my couriers off, I left Mr. Erlandson with two men to share his solitude, and

reached the sea without experiencing any adventure worth notice. Proceeding along the coast, I was induced, one evening, by the flattering appearance of the weather, to attempt the passage of a deep bay; which being accomplished, there was little danger of being delayed afterwards by stress of weather. This step I soon had cause to repent. The sea hitherto presented a smooth surface; not a breath of wind was felt, and the stars shone out brightly. A few clouds began to appear on the horizon; and the boat began to rise and fall with the heaving of the sea. Understanding what these signs portended, we immediately pulled for the shore; but had scarcely altered our course when the stars disappeared, a tremendous noise struck upon our ears from seaward, and the storm was upon us. In the impenetrable obscurity of the night, not a trace of land could be discovered; but we continued to ply our oars, while each succeeding billow threatened immediate destruction.

The horrors of our situation increased; the man on the out-look called out that he saw breakers

a-head in every direction, and escape appeared to be next to impossible. My crew of Scottish Islanders, however, continued their painful exertions without evincing the apprehensions they must have felt, by a murmur. The crisis was now at hand. We approached so near to the breakers that it was impossible to avoid them; and the men lay on their oars, expecting the next moment would be their last.

In such a situation the thoughts of even the most depraved naturally carry them beyond the limits of time; and by these thoughts, I believe, the soul of every one was absorbed; yet the men lost not their presence of mind. Suddenly, the voice of the look-out was heard amid the roar of the breakers, calling our attention to a dark breach in the line of foam that stretched out before us, which he fancied to be a channel between the rocks. A few desperate strokes brought us to the spot, when, to our unspeakable joy, we found it to answer the man's conjecture; but, so narrow was the passage, that the oars on both sides of the boat struck the rocks; a minute

afterwards we found ourselves becalmed and in safety. The boat being moored, and the men ordered to watch by turns, we lay down to sleep, as we best could, supperless, and without having tasted food since early dawn.

The wind still blew fresh on the ensuing morning; but we found, to our great satisfaction, that we had entered a kind of channel that lay along the shore, where we were protected from the storm by the innumerable rocky islets that stretched along the mainland. Regarding the labyrinth of islands through which we had effected a passage in the darkness, we were struck with wonder at our escape; and felt convinced that the hand of Providence alone could have guided us through such perils in safety.

CHAPTER V.

ESQUIMAUX ARRIVE FROM THE NORTH SHORE OF HUDSON'S STRAIT, ON A RAFT—DESPATCH FROM THE GOVERNOR—DISTRESS OF THE ESQUIMAUX—FORWARD PROVISIONS TO MR. E——. RETURN OF THE PARTY—THEIR DEPLORABLE CONDITION.

We reached Fort Chimo on the 20th September. A greater number of Esquimaux were assembled about the post than I had yet seen; and among them I was astonished to find a family from the north side of the Strait, and still more astonished when I learned the way they had crossed—a raft formed of pieces of drift wood picked up along the shore, afforded the means of effecting the hazardous enterprise.

On questioning them what was their object in

risking their lives in so extraordinary an adventure, they replied, that they wanted wood to make canoes, and visit the Esquimaux on the south side of the Strait.

"And what if you had been overtaken by a storm?" said I.

"We should all have gone to the bottom," was the cool reply.

In fact, they had made a very narrow escape, a storm having come on just as they landed on the first island.

The fact of these people having crossed Hudson's Strait on so rude and frail a conveyance, strongly corroborates, I think, the opinion that America was originally peopled from Asia. The Asiatic side of Behring's Strait affording timber sufficiently large for the purpose of building boats or canoes, there seems nothing improbable in supposing that, when once in possession of that wonderful and useful invention—a boat, they might be induced, even by curiosity—that powerful stimulus to adventure—to visit the nearest island, and from thence proceed to the continent

of America; and finding it, perhaps, possessed of superior advantages to the shores they had left, settle there. My voyageur was evidently induced as much by curiosity as by the desire of procuring a canoe, to visit the south side of Hudson's Strait, where the passage is as wide as between the island in Behring's Strait and the two continents.

At an early period of the winter I was gratified by the arrival of despatches from the civilized world. The packet was found by the Indians at Esquimaux Bay, whither I had sent them, and forwarded to me by Mr. Erlandson's two men. By his letters I was grieved to learn that starvation stared him in the face; the fishing, that promised so well when I passed, having entirely failed, and no deer were to be found. He wrote me, however, that he would maintain his post while a piece of parchment remained to gnaw!

The Governor's letters conveyed the thanks of the Governor and Committee for my "laudable exertions;" while his Excellency intimated, in language not to be misunderstood, that my pro-

motion depended on my successful management of the affairs of Ungava, "which he regretted to find were still in an unpromising state."

What effect this announcement had on my feelings need not be mentioned—after a painful servitude of eighteen years thus to be compelled to make renewed, and even impossible exertions ere I obtained the reward of my toil, while many others had reached the goal in a much shorter time without experiencing either hardship or privation,—the injustice I had suffered, or the deceit that had been practised on *me*. As a balm to my wounded feelings, my correspondents in the north informed me that seven clerks had been promoted since I left Norway House.

Many of the Esquimaux referred to in a preceding page passed the winter in this quarter, not daring to return in consequence of an hostile rencontre they had had with some of their own tribes on their way hither. The quarrel, like most Indian quarrels, originated in an attempt to carry off women: both parties had recourse to arms,

and a desperate struggle ensued, in which our visitors were completely defeated, with the loss of several lives.

They remained about the post for a short time, admiring its wonderful novelties—wonderful to them—and then proceeded some distance up the river to waylay the deer that had already crossed unobserved by them. The poor creatures, unaware of this fact, remained on the ground until every article that afforded any kind of sustenance was consumed; when they started for the post, leaving the weaker of the party to follow as they best could. They all arrived the same day except two widows, who had lost their husbands in the fray. I sent off two young men with a supply of provisions to meet them, but the wretches, having devoured the food, returned without the women, although I had previously supplied their own wants. Next morning I sent off one of my own men, accompanied by an Esquimaux; but, as might have been expected, the women were found lying dead on the ice near each other.

Although Mr. Erlandson did not particularly

request any assistance from me, the report he communicated as to the failure of provisions was sufficient to induce me to use my best endeavours to relieve his wants. With this view I hired an Indian lad to act as guide to a party whom I despatched overland with the necessary supplies. The guide assured me they would perform the journey, going and coming, in a month. The appointed period passed, and no accounts of them; and week after week, until I at last despaired of ever seeing them in life. At the end of about two months they made their appearance, but in so deplorable a state of emaciation that we could scarcely recognise them.

The roads proved so bad that they were nearly a month on their way going, and consequently they had consumed almost all the provisions they had for the whole trip. Mr. Erlandson's scanty supply not allowing him to afford them any assistance for their return, they commenced their journey homeward with one meal a day, which they continued until all was gone, when they fed on their dogs; and they finally arrived at the

house without having tasted any kind of food for three days. Their spectre-like forms excited the greatest pity; the interpreter, who came to tell me of their arrival, was in tears. No time was lost in administering relief; but the greatest caution was necessary in administering it, or the consequences might have been fatal.

I was mortified to find, on the approach of spring, that my stock of goods did not admit of supplying the interior; and I was consequently compelled to relinquish the advantages that had cost us so much to acquire. Without goods we could not, of course, maintain our position in that quarter.

CHAPTER VI.

TRIP TO ESQUIMAUX BAY—GOVERNOR'S INSTRUCTIONS—MY REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE—RECOMMEND THE ABANDONMENT OF UNGAVA SETTLEMENT—SUCCESS OF THE ARCTIC EXPEDITION, CONDUCTED BY MESSRS. DEASE AND SIMPSON—RETURN BY SEA TO FORT CHIMO—NARROWLY ESCAPE SHIPWRECK IN THE UNGAVA RIVER—INHUMAN AND IMPOLITIC MEASURE OF THE GOVERNOR—CONSEQUENT DISTRESS AT THE POST.

IMMEDIATELY on the opening of the navigation I started for Esquimaux Bay, with two Indians, in a small canoe, and without any of the usual conveniences. Mr. Erlandson having been ordered to the southern department, followed in another canoe.

Arrived at the post, we were gratified by the receipt of despatches just come to hand by the ship.

The Governor's letter apprized me that a vessel would be sent round to Ungava every alternate year; and strictly enjoined me to have no further communication with Esquimaux Bay *overland*, "as much unnecessary expense was incurred by these journeys." Thus were we consigned to our fate for a period of two years with as little feeling as if we had been so many cattle, and debarred from all communication with our friends, by word or letter, merely to save a trifling expense!

Could the Honourable Company be swayed by so paltry a consideration in subjecting us to so grievous an inconvenience? Surely not; a body of men so respectable could neither have authorized nor sanctioned such sordid parsimony. The generous proposition originated with Mr. Simpson alone, and to him be the honour ascribed.

Being fully persuaded in my own mind of the utter hopelessness of the Ungava adventure, I transmitted a report to the Governor and Committee on the subject; recommending the abandonment of the settlement altogether, as the enormous expense of supplying us by sea pre-

cluded the idea of any profit being ever realised; while it was quite evident the Company's benevolent views toward the Esquimaux could not be carried into effect. The extreme poverty and barrenness of their country, and their pertinacious adherence to their seal-skin dresses, which no argument of ours could induce them to exchange for the less comfortable articles of European clothing, were insurmountable obstacles. The Honourable Company, while they wished to supply the wants of the Esquimaux, still urged the expediency of securing the trade of the interior.

A circumstance that came to my knowledge in the course of the winter promised the attainment of that object. I learned from an old Indian, that the fall and rapid I met with on my way to the sea the preceding season, could be avoided, by following a chain of small lakes. My informant had never seen those falls himself, and could, from the oral report he had heard, give but a very imperfect description of the route. Still, I determined on making another attempt

to explore the whole river, knowing well, that if I succeeded in discovering the new route, there could be no further difficulty in supplying the interior. Meantime, I was gratified to learn, by letters from my friend Mr. Dease, that the expedition in which he had been engaged was crowned with success;—the long sought-after north-west passage being at length laid open to the *knowledge* of mankind, and a question, that at one time excited the enterprise of the merchant and the curiosity of the learned, settled beyond a doubt.

While on this subject, I cannot help expressing my surprise at the manner Mr. Dease's name is mentioned in the published narrative of the expedition, where he is represented as being employed merely as purveyor. It might have been said with equal propriety that Mr. Simpson was employed merely as astronomer. The fact is, the services of both gentlemen were equally necessary; and to the prudence, judgment, and experience of Mr. Dease, the successful issue of the enterprise may undoubtedly be ascribed, no

less than to the astronomical science of Mr. Simpson.

Having finished my correspondence, I embarked for Fort Chimo, on board a brig that had been recently built for the trade of this district and that of Esquimaux Bay. Our passage afforded no adventure worthy of notice; icebergs we saw in abundance, whose dimensions astonished us, but having no desire to form a close acquaintance with them, we kept at a respectful distance; and finally entered the Ungava River, on the 24th of August, at so early an hour of the day, that we expected to reach the post ere night-fall.

We were doomed to disappointment. As we ascended the river, the breeze fell, and darkness set in upon us; yet we still pressed on. Presently, however, so dense a fog arose, that nothing could be seen a yard off. In this dilemma our safest course would have been to anchor, but unfortunately that part of the river was the most unfavourable possible for our purpose, from the extraordinary strength of the current, and the rocky nature of the bottom. Our skipper seemed

quite at a loss, but accident decided. The vessel struck, altered her course a little, struck again, put about, and struck again and again. The anchor was dropped as the only chance of escaping the dangers in which we were involved. The anchor dragged a short time, and finally caught apparently in a cleft of the rocks.

Soon after the tide began to flow, and we fancied our dangers over; but the crisis was not yet come. The ebb-tide returned, rushing down with the current of the river with such overwhelming velocity, that we expected the vessel would be torn from her moorings. Two men were placed at the helm to keep her steady, but, in spite of their utmost exertions, she was dashed from side to side like a feather, while the current pitched into her till the water entered the hawse-holes. Pitching, and swinging, and dashed about in this fearful manner for some time, the anchor was at length disengaged, and dragged along the bottom with a grating noise, which, with the roaring of the rapid, and the whistling of the wind through the rigging, formed a combination of

sounds that would have appalled the most resolute. The fog having cleared away, we discovered a point projecting far into the river, some two hundred yards below, towards which we were drifting broadside, and rapidly nearing. The boats were got ready, to escape, if possible, the impending catastrophe, when the vessel was suddenly brought to with a tremendous jerk, and instantly swung round to the tide. By this time, however, its strength was considerably abated, and daylight soon appearing, I sent on an Esquimaux who had come on board, with a note to the post, requesting that a pilot should be sent us with the utmost despatch.

Meantime, seeing our way clear before us, we weighed anchor, and advanced to within three miles of the establishment, when a boat was seen approaching, rowed by six stout islanders. On coming along-side, a rope was thrown to them, and made fast to the fore-stem. Four of the men had scrambled on board, when a sudden blast swelled our sails, and propelled us through the water with such force, that the fore-part of

the boat was torn away, leaving one of the men floundering in the water, and the other clinging to the rope. The latter was dragged on board, severely bruised; but the former remained in the water for at least two hours, and would have perished before our eyes, had he not got hold of a couple of oars, by which he managed to keep himself afloat. We soon anchored opposite the post, and every exertion being made to expedite the departure of the vessel, we were in the course of a few days left to vegetate in quiet.

On examining the quantity of provisions I had received, I was not a little alarmed to find it scarcely sufficient for the consumption of one year, his Excellency's communication having acquainted me that it was a supply for two years! Thus we were thrown on the precarious resources of the country for life or for death; for if those resources should fail us, we must either remain and starve on the spot, or, abandoning the settlement, endeavour to escape to Esquimaux Bay and run the risk of starving by the way. Economy so ill-timed argued as little in favour of the Gover-

nor's judgment as of his humanity. Admitting our lives were of so trifling a value, the abandonment of the settlement, with all the goods and furs in it, would have subjected the Company to a very serious loss. Every precaution, however, was taken to provide against a contingency which involved such serious consequences; the men were dispersed in every direction to shift for themselves, some being supplied with guns and ammunition, others with nets, a lake of considerable extent having been lately discovered, which the natives reported to abound with fish. Early in the month of December my fishermen came in with the mortifying intelligence of the entire failure of the fishery; and soon after a messenger arrived from the hunting party to beg a supply of provisions, which my limited means, alas! compelled me to deny. Not a deer had been seen, and the partridges had become so scarce of late that they barely afforded the means of sustaining life. All I could therefore do for my poor men was to supply them with more ammunition and send them off again.

While their lot was thus wretched, mine was not enviable; one solitary meal a day was all I allowed myself and those who remained with me; and I must do them the justice to say, that they submitted to these privations without a murmur, being aware that it was only by exercising the most rigid economy that our provisions could hold out the allotted time; the arrival of the ship being an event too uncertain to be calculated upon. By stinting ourselves in this manner, we managed to eke out a miserable subsistence, without expending much of our imported provisions, until the arrival of the deer in the month of March, when we fared plentifully if not sumptuously.

CHAPTER VII.

ANOTHER EXPLORING EXPEDITION—MY PROMOTION—WINTER AT CHIMO — OBTAIN PERMISSION TO VISIT BRITAIN— UNGAVA ABANDONED.

1841.—On the opening of the navigation I set out on another exploring expedition. Without entering into particulars so devoid of interest, I would merely observe that, with patience and perseverance, we ultimately succeeded in making good our passage by the Hamilton, or Grand River, and found it to answer our expectations in every respect.

On arriving at Esquimaux Bay, we found the vessel from Quebec riding at anchor—a joyful sight, since it gave assurance that we should hear

from friends and relatives, and receive intelligence of the events that had occurred in the world for the last twelve months. The Governor's communication acquainted me with my promotion, and *sincerely* congratulated me on the event. Whether I had reason or not to doubt his sincerity, let the reader judge who knows the treatment I had experienced at his hands. Fifteen years ago I was assured of being in the "direct road to preferment,"—twenty years of toil and misery have I served to obtain it.

Considering myself, therefore, under no obligation to his Excellency, I addressed a letter to the Directors, expressing my thanks for the benefit they had conferred upon me, and requesting permission to visit the land of my nativity next year.

I was fortunate enough to find a couple of canoes at Esquimaux Bay, sufficiently large to admit of conveying an outfit to the interior, and equally fortunate to find Mr. Davis, the gentleman in charge of the district, possessed the will and ability to promote my views. All my arrangements at this place being completed, I set off on

my return, and was happy to find, on my arrival at the outpost, that the outfit was rendered in safety, not the slightest accident having occurred on the way.

I arrived at Fort Chimo in the beginning of October. The dreary winter setting in immediately, we commenced the usual course of vegetative existence; and I consider it as unnecessary as it would be uninteresting to say anything further concerning it than that this season passed without our being subjected to such grievous privation as during the last. The greater part of the people being distributed among the outposts, reduced our expenditure of provisions so much, that I felt I had nothing now to fear on the score of starvation; and the precautions I had taken the preceding winter enabled us not only to indulge occasionally in the *luxuries* of bread-and-butter, but also to contemplate the possibility of the non-arrival of the ship without much anxiety.

1842.—On the opening of the navigation I again set out for Esquimaux Bay, where I found

letters from the Secretary, conveying the welcome intelligence that my request for permission to visit Britain had been granted, and that the Directors, agreeably to my recommendation, had determined on abandoning Ungava, the ship being ordered round this season to convey the people and property to Esquimaux Bay.

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CHAPTER VIII.

GENERAL REMARKS.

CLIMATE OF UNGAVA—AURORA BOREALIS—SOIL—VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS—ANIMALS—BIRDS—FISH—GEOLOGICAL FEATURES.

It need scarcely be observed that, in so high a latitude as that of Ungava, the climate presents the extremes of heat and cold; the moderate temperature of spring and autumn is unknown, the rigour of winter being immediately succeeded by the intense heat of summer, and *vice versâ*.

On the 12th of June, 1840, the thermometer was observed to rise from 10° below zero to 76° in the shade, the sky clear and the weather calm; this was, in fact, the first day of summer. For ten days previously the thermometer ranged

from 15° below zero to 32° above, and the weather was as boisterous as in the month of January, snowing and blowing furiously all the time. The heat continued to increase, till the thermometer frequently exhibited from 85° to 100° in the shade. This intense heat may, no doubt, be owing in a considerable degree to the reflection of the solar rays from the rocky surface of the country, a great part of which is destitute of vegetation. When the wind blows from the sea the atmosphere is so much cooled as to become disagreeable. These vicissitudes are frequently experienced during summer, and are probably caused by the sea's being always encumbered by ice. It is remarkable that the severest cold in this quarter is invariably accompanied by stormy weather; whereas, in the interior of the continent, severe cold always produces calm.

The winter may be said to commence in October; by the end of this month the ground is covered with snow, and the rivers and smaller lakes are frozen over; the actions of the tide,

however, and the strength of the current, often keep Ungava River open till the month of January. At this period I have neither seen, read, nor heard of any locality under heaven that can offer a more cheerless abode to civilized man than Ungava. The rumbling noise created by the ice, when driven to and fro by the force of the tide, continually stuns the ear; while the light of heaven is hidden by the fog that hangs in the air, shrouding everything in the gloom of a dark twilight. If Pluto should leave his own gloomy mansion *in tenebris tartari*, he might take up his abode here, and gain or lose but little by the exchange.

"The parched ground burns frore, and cold performs
The effect of fire."—MILTON.

When the river sets fast, the beauties of the winter scene are disclosed—one continuous surface of glaring snow, with here and there a clump of dwarf pine, or the bald summits of barren hills, from which the violence of the winter storms sweep away even the tenacious lichens.

The winter storms are the most violent I ever experienced, sweeping every thing before them; and often prove fatal to the Indians when overtaken by them in places where no shelter can be found. The year previous to my arrival, a party of Indians ventured out to a barren island in the bay in quest of deer, taking their women along with them. While engaged in the chase, a sudden storm compelled them to make for the mainland with all possible speed. The women were soon exhausted by their exertions, and, unable to proceed farther, were at length covered by the snow, and left to their fate. As soon as the fury of the storm abated, the men went in search of them; but in vain; they were never found.

During winter the sky is frequently illuminated by the Aurora Borealis even in the day-time; and I have observed that when the south wind, the coldest in this quarter, (traversing, as it does, the frost-bound regions of Canada and Labrador,) blows for any length of time, the sky becomes clear, and the aurora disappears. No sooner,

however, does the east wind blow, which, being charged with the vapours of the Atlantic, induces mild weather even in midwinter, than they again dart forth their coruscations—more brightly at first, afterwards more faintly, till, if the wind continue, they again disappear.

These phenomena seem to warrant the conclusion that the aurora is produced by the evolving of the electric fluid, through the collision of bodies of cold and warm air. The same phenomena are observable in New Caledonia; the east wind, passing over the glaciers of the Rocky Mountains, cools the atmosphere to such a degree as to cause frost every month in summer; the west wind, on the contrary, causes heat; and there, as in Ungava, the change of winds is followed by what may be termed the Mountain Aurora (*Aurora Montium?*)

During my residence of five years at Ungava, the thermometer fell twice to 53° below zero; and frequently ranged from 38° to 48° for several days together; the extreme heat rose to 100° at noon in the shade.

The soil of Ungava consists principally of decayed lichens, which form a substance resembling the peat moss of the Scottish moors. In this soil the lily-white "Cana" grows, a plant which I have not seen in any other part of the continent, although it may elsewhere be found in similar situations. In the low grounds along the banks of rivers, the soil is generally deep and fertile enough to produce timber of a large size; in the valleys are found clumps of wood, which become more and more stunted as they creep up the sides of the sterile hills, till at length they degenerate into lowly shrubs. The woods bordering on the sea-coast consist entirely of larch; which also predominates in the interior, intermixed with white pine, and a few poplars and birches. The hardy willow vegetates wherever it can find a particle of soil to take root in; and the plant denominated Labrador tea, flourishes luxuriantly in its native soil. In favourable seasons the country is covered with every variety of berries—blueberry, cranberry, gooseberry, red currant, strawberry, raspberry, ground raspberry (*rubus arcticus*), and the

billberry (*rubus chamæmorus*), a delicious fruit produced in the swamps, and bearing some resemblance to the strawberry in shape, but different in flavour and colour, being yellow when ripe. Liquorice root is found on the banks of South River.

To enumerate the varieties of animals is an easy task; the extremely barren nature of the country, and the severity of the climate, prove so unfavourable to the animal kingdom, that only a few of the more hardy species are to be found here: viz.—

Black, brown, grisly, and polar bears.

Black, silver, cross, blue, red, and white foxes.

Wolves, wolverines, martens, and the beaver (but extremely rare).

Otters, minks, musk-rats, ermine.

Arctic hares, rabbits, rein-deer; and the lemming, in some parts of the interior.

When we consider the great extent of country that intervenes between Ungava and the plains of the "far west," it seems quite inexplicable that the grisly bear should be found in so insulated a situation, and none in the intermediate country:

the fact of their being here, however, does not admit of a doubt, for I have traded and sent to England several of their skins. The information I have received from the natives induces me to think that the varieties of colour in bears mark them as distinct species, and not the produce of the same litter, as some writers affirm. Why, otherwise, do we not find the different varieties in Canada, where the grisly bear has never been seen? The sagacious animals seem to be well aware of their generic affinity, since they are often seen together, sharing the same carcass, and apparently on terms of the most intimate fellowship.

It is a singular circumstance, that she-bears with young are seldom or never killed; at least it is so extraordinary a circumstance, that when it does happen, it is spoken of for years afterwards. She must, therefore, retire to her den immediately after impregnation; and cannot go above three months with young; as instances have occurred of their being found suckling their young in the month of January, at which period they are not larger than the common house-rat, presenting the appearance

of animals in embryo, yet perfect in all their parts.

Bruin prepares his hybernal dormitory with great care, lining it with hay, and stopping up the entrance with the same material; he enters it in October, and comes out in the month of April. He passes the winter alone, in a state of morbid drowsiness, from which he is roused with difficulty; and neither eats nor drinks, but seems to derive nourishment from sucking his paws. He makes his exit in spring apparently in as good condition as when he entered; but a few days' exposure to the air reduces him to skin and bone.

The natives pay particular attention to the appearance presented by the unoccupied dens they may discover in summer: if Bruin has removed his litter of the preceding winter, he intends to reoccupy the same quarters; if he allows it to remain, he never returns; and the hunter takes his measures accordingly.

The black bear shuns the presence of man, and is by no means a dangerous animal; the grisly bear, on the contrary, commands considerable

respect from the "lord of the creation," whom he attacks without hesitation. By the natives, the paw of a grisly bear is considered as honourable a trophy as the scalp of a human enemy.

The reports I have had, both from natives and white trappers, confirm the opinion that certain varieties of the fox belong to the same species,—such as the black, silver, cross, and red; all of which have been found in the same nest, but never any of the white or blue. The former, too, are distinguished for their cunning and sagacity; while the latter are very stupid, and fall an easy prey to the trapper; a circumstance of itself sufficient to prove a difference of species.

There are two varieties of the rein-deer,—the migratory, and the stationary or wood-deer: the latter is a much larger animal, but not abundant; the former are extremely numerous, migrating in herds at particular seasons, and observing certain laws on their march, from which they seldom deviate. The does make their appearance at Ungava River generally in the beginning of March, coming from the west, and directing their course

over the barren grounds near the coast, until they reach George's River, where they halt to bring forth their young, in the month of June. Meantime the bucks, being divided into separate herds, pursue a direct course through the interior, for the same river, and remain scattered about on the upper parts of it until the month of September, when they assemble, and proceed slowly towards the coast. By this time the does move onward towards the interior, the fawns having now sufficient strength to accompany them, and follow the banks of George's River until they meet the bucks, when the rutting season commences, in the month of October; the whole then proceed together, through the interior, to the place whence they came. In the same manner, I have been informed, the deer perform their migratory circuits everywhere; observing the same order on their march, following nearly the same route unless prevented by accidental circumstances, and observing much the same periods of arrival and departure.

The colour of the rein-deer is uniformly the same, presenting no variety of "spotted black

and red." In summer it is a very dark grey, approaching to black, and light grey in winter. The colour of the doe is of a darker shade than that of the buck, whose breast is perfectly white in winter. Individuals are seen of a white colour at all seasons of the year. The bucks shed their antlers in the month of December; the does in the month of January. A few bucks are sometimes to be met with who roam about apart from the larger herds, and are in prime condition both in summer and winter. These *solitaires* are said to be unsuccessful candidates for the favours of the does, who, having been worsted by their more powerful rivals in *contentione amoris*, withdraw from the community, and assuming the cowl, ever after eschew female society; an opinion which their good condition at all seasons seems to corroborate.

The rein-deer is subject to greater annoyance from flies than any other animal in the creation; neither change of season nor situation exempts them from this torture. Their great persecutor is a species of gad-fly, (*œstries tarandi*,) that

hovers around them in clouds during summer, and makes them the instruments of their own torture throughout the year. The fly, after piercing the skin of the deer, deposits its eggs between the outer and inner skin, where they are hatched by the heat of the animal's body. In the month of March, the chrysalides burst through the skin, and drop on the ground, when they may be seen crawling in immense numbers along the deer paths as they pass from west to east.

The only birds observed in winter are grouse, ptarmigan, a small species of wood-pecker, butcher-bird, and the diminutive tomtit. We are visited in summer by swans, geese, ducks, eagles, hawks, ravens, owls, robins, and swallows. The eider-duck, so much prized for its down, is found in considerable numbers. The geese are of a most inferior kind, owing, I suppose, to the poor feeding the country affords; when they arrive in summer the ice is often still solid, when they betake themselves to the hills, and feed on berries.

The lakes produce only white fish, trout and carp. We took now and then a few salmon in the river, and there is no doubt that this fish abounds on the coast.

In the sea are found the black whale, porpoise, sea-horse, seal, and the narwal or sea unicorn; the horn of the latter, solid ivory, is a beautiful object. The largest I procured measured six feet and a half in length, four inches in diameter at the root, and a quarter of an inch at the point. It is of a spiral form, and projects from near the extremity of the snout; it presents a most singular appearance when seen moving along above the surface of the water, while the animal is concealed beneath.

The geological features of the country present so little variety, that one versed in that interesting science would experience but little difficulty in describing them; a mere outline, however, is all I can venture to present.

Along the sea-coast the formation is granitic syenite; then, proceeding about forty miles in the direction of South River, syenite occurs, which,

about sixty miles higher up, runs into green stone: very fine slate succeeds. At the height of land dividing the waters that flow in different directions, into Esquimaux and Ungava Bays, the formation becomes syenitic schist, and continues so to within a short distance of the great fall on Hamilton River; when syenite succeeds; then gneiss; and along the shores of Esquimaux Bay syenitic gneiss, and pure quartz: lumps of black and red hornblend are met with everywhere. The country is covered with boulders rounded off by the action of water, most of which are different from the rocks *in situ*, and must have been transported from a great distance, some being of granite—a rock not to be found in this quarter.

The rugged and precipitous banks of George's River are occasionally surmounted by hills; at the base of all these elevations, deep horizontal indentures appear running in parallel lines opposite each other on either side of the river,—a circumstance which indicates the action of tides and waves at a time when the other parts of the land were submerged, and the tops of those hills

formed islands. Along certain parts of the coast of Labrador rows of boulders are perceived lying in horizontal lines; the lowest about two hundred yards distant from high-water mark, while the farthest extend to near the crest of the adjacent hills. Several deep cavities and embankments of sand are observed in the interior, bearing unequivocal marks of having been, at one time, subject to the influence of the sea.

I shall conclude these few remarks by observing that, whatever conclusions the geologist may arrive at as to the remote or recent elevation of this country, the tops of the higher hills appear to have been formerly islands in the sea; and I doubt not but the same may be said of the higher lands on every part of the Arctic regions. Admitting this to have been the case, it contributes to confirm the theory of that distinguished philosopher, Sir Charles Lyell, as to the cause of the changes that have taken place in the climate of the northern regions.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NASCOPIES—THEIR RELIGION—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—CLOTHING—MARRIAGE—COMMUNITY OF GOODS.

THE Indians inhabiting the interior of Ungava, or, it may be said with equal propriety, the interior of Labrador, are a tribe of the Cree nation designated Nascopies, and numbering about one hundred men able to bear arms. Their language, a dialect of the Cree or Cristeneau, exhibits a considerable mixture of Sauteux words, with a few peculiar to themselves. The Nascopies have the same religious belief as their kindred tribes in every other part of the continent. They believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, the Ruler of the universe, and the Author of all

good. They believe, also, in the existence of a bad spirit, the author of all evil. Each is believed to be served by a number of subordinate spirits. Sacrifices are offered to each; to the good, by way of supplication and gratitude; to the evil, by way of conciliation and deprecation. Their local genii are also supposed to be possessed of the power of doing good, or inflicting evil, and are likewise propitiated by sacrifices; the "men of medicine" are viewed in nearly the same light. A few of them who visit the king's posts, have been baptized, and taught to mutter something they call prayers, and on this account are esteemed good Christians by their tutors; while every action of their lives proves them to be as much Pagans as ever; at least, to those who look for some *fruit* of faith, and who may be ignorant of the miraculous efficacy of holy water, and can form no idea of its operation on the soul, they appear so.

Of all the Indians I have seen, the Nascopies seem most averse to locomotion; many of them grow up to man's estate without once visiting a

trading post. Previously to the establishment of this post they were wont to assemble at a certain rendezvous in the interior, and deliver their furs to some elderly man of the party, who proceeded with them to the King's posts, or Esquimaux Bay, and traded them for such articles as they required. So little intercourse have this people had with the whites, that they may be still considered as unsophisticated "children of nature," and possessed, of course, of all the virtues ascribed to such; yet I must say, that my acquaintance with them disclosed nothing that impressed me with a higher opinion of them than of my own race, corrupted as they are by the arts of civilized life.

The Nascopie freely indulges all the grosser passions of his nature; he has no term in his language to express the sensation of shame; the feeling and the word are alike unknown. Many circumstances might be adduced in proof of this, but I have no desire to disgust the reader. Previously to our arrival here, there was not such an article of domestic utility known among them as a spoon; the unclean hand performed

every office. They take their meals sitting in a circle round a kettle, and commence operations by skimming off the fat with their hands, and lapping it up like dogs; then every one helps himself to the solids, cutting, gnawing, and tearing until the whole is devoured, or until repletion precludes further exertions, when, like the gorged beast of prey, they lie down to sleep.

The Nascopies practise polygamy more from motives of convenience than any other — the more wives, the more slaves. The poor creatures, in fact, are in a state of relentless slavery; every species of drudgery devolves upon them. When they remove from camp to camp in winter, the women set out first, dragging sledges loaded with their effects, and such of the children as are incapable of walking; meantime the men remain in the abandoned encampment smoking their pipes, until they suppose the women are sufficiently far advanced on the route to reach the new encampment ere they overtake them.

Arrived at the spot, the women clear the ground of snow, erect the tents, and collect fuel;

and when their arrangements are completed, their lords step in to enjoy themselves. The sole occupation of the men is hunting, and, in winter, fishing. They do not even carry home the game; that duty also falls to the lot of the female, unless when the family has been starving for some time, when the men condescend to carry home enough for immediate use.

The horrid practice still obtains among the Nascopies of destroying their parents and relatives, when old age incapacitates them for further exertion. I must, however, do them the justice to say, that the parent himself expresses a wish to depart, otherwise the unnatural deed would probably never be committed; for they in general treat their old people with much care and tenderness. The son or nearest relative performs the office of executioner,—the self-devoted victim being disposed of by strangulation.* When any

* "Quidam parentes et propinquos, priusquam annis et macie conficiantur, velut hostias cædunt, *eorumque visceribus epulantur.*" The Nascopies do not feast on the "viscera" of their victims, nor do I believe the inhabitants of India, or of

one dies in winter, the body is placed on a scaffold till summer, when it is interred.

The Nascopies depend principally on the reindeer for subsistence,—a dependence which the erratic habits of these animals render extremely precarious. Should they happen to miss the deer on their passage through the country in autumn, they experience the most grievous inconvenience, and often privations, the succeeding winter; as they must then draw their living from the lakes, with unremitting toil,—boring the ice, which is sometimes from eight to nine feet thick, for the purpose of setting their hooks, and perhaps not taking a single fish after a day's hard work. Nevertheless, they must still continue their exertions till they succeed, shifting their hooks from one part of the lake to another, until every spot is searched. They understand the art of setting nets under the ice perfectly. Towards the latter end of December, however, the fish gain the

any other country under heaven, ever did. Yet the coincidence is singular, in other respects, at such a distance of time and place.

deep water, and remain still to the latter end of March. Not a fish enters the net during this period.

Partridges are very numerous in certain localities, but cannot be trusted to as a means of living, as every part of the country affords them food, and when much annoyed at one place they move off to another.

It will be seen from the foregoing remarks, that the Nascopies, like all other erratic tribes, are subject to the vicissitudes their mode of life necessarily involves; at one time wallowing in abundance, at another dying of want. Fortunately for themselves, they are at present the most independent of the whites of any other Indians on this continent, the Esquimaux excepted. The few fur-bearing animals their barren country affords are so highly prized, that the least exertion enables them to procure their very limited wants; and the skin of the rein-deer affords them the most comfortable clothing they could possess. They have a particular art, too, of dressing this skin, so as to render it as soft

and pliable as chamois, in which state it becomes a valuable article of trade.

As trading posts, however, are now established on their lands, I doubt not but artificial wants will, in time, be created, that may become as indispensable to their comfort as their present real wants. All the arts of the trader are exercised to produce such a result, and those arts never fail of ultimate success. Even during the last two years of my management, the demand for certain articles of European manufacture had greatly increased.

The winter dress of the Nascopie consists of a jacket of deer-skin, close all round, worn with the hair next the skin, and an over-coat of the same material reaching to his knees, the hair outside. This coat overlaps in front, and is secured by a belt, from which depends his knife and smoking-bag. A pair of leather breeches, and leggings, or stockings of cloth, protect his legs, though but imperfectly, from the cold; his hands, however, are well defended by a pair of gauntlets that reach his elbows; and on his head he wears a

cap richly ornamented with bear's and eagle's claws. His long thick hair, however, renders the head-gear an article of superfluity,—but it is the fashion. The dress of the women consists of a square piece of dressed deer-skin, girt round them by a cloth or worsted belt, and fastened over their shoulders by leather straps; a jacket of leather, and cloth leggings. I have also observed some of them wearing a garment in imitation of a gown. The leather dresses, both of men and women, are generally painted; and often display more taste than one would be disposed to give them credit for.

The travelling equipage of the Nascopies consists of a small leather tent, a deer-skin robe with the hair on, a leather bag with some down in it, and a kettle. When he lies down he divests himself of his upper garment, which he spreads under him; then, thrusting his limbs into the down bag, and rolling himself up in his robe, he draws his knees up close to his chin; and thus defended, the severest cold does not affect him.

Considering the manner in which their women are treated, it can scarcely be supposed that their courtships are much influenced by sentiments of love; in fact, the tender passion seems unknown to the savage breast. When a young man attains a certain age, and considers himself able to provide for a wife—if the term may be so debased—he acquaints his parents with his wish, and gives himself no further concern about the matter, until they have concluded the matrimonial negotiations with the parents of *their*, not *his* intended, whose sentiments are never consulted on the occasion. The youth then proceeds to his father-in-law's tent, and remains there for a twelvemonth; at the end of this period he may remain longer or depart, and he is considered ever after as an independent member of the community, subject to no control. Marriages are allowed between near relatives; cousins are considered as brothers and sisters, and are addressed by the same terms. It is not considered improper to marry two sisters, either in succession or both at the same time.

The Nascopies have certain customs in hunting peculiar to themselves. If a wounded animal escape, even a short distance, ere he drops, he becomes the property of the person who first reaches him, and not of the person who shot him; or if the animal be mortally wounded and do not fall immediately, and another Indian fire and bring him down, the last shot gains the prize.

In their intercourse with us the Nascopies evince a very different disposition from the other branches of the Cree family, being selfish and inhospitable in the extreme; exacting rigid payment for the smallest portion of food. Yet I do not know that we have any right to blame a practice in them, which they have undoubtedly learned from us. What do they obtain from us without payment? Nothing:—not a shot of powder,—not a ball,—not a flint. But whatever may be said of their conduct towards the whites, no people can exercise the laws of hospitality with greater generosity, or show less selfishness, towards each other, than the

Nascopies. The only part of an animal the huntsman retains for himself is the head; every other part is given up for the common benefit. Fish, flesh, and fowl are distributed in the same liberal and impartial manner; and he who contributes most seems as contented with his share, however small it may be, as if he had had no share in procuring it. In fact, a community of goods seems almost established among them; the few articles they purchase from us shift from hand to hand, and seldom remain more than two or three days in the hands of the original purchaser.

The Nascopies, surrounded by kindred tribes, are strangers to the calamities of war, and are consequently a peaceful, harmless people; yet they cherish the unprovoked enmity of their race towards the poor Esquimaux, whom they never fail to attack, when an opportunity offers of doing so with impunity. Our presence, however, has had the effect of establishing a more friendly intercourse between them; and to the fact that

many of the Esquimaux have of late acquired fire-arms, and are not to be attacked without some risk, may be ascribed, in no small degree, the present forbearance of their enemies.

CHAPTER X.

THE ESQUIMAUX — PROBABLE ORIGIN — IDENTITY OF LANGUAGE FROM LABRADOR TO BEHRING'S STRAITS—THEIR AMOURS — MARRIAGES — RELIGION — TREATMENT OF PARENTS—ANECDOTE—MODE OF PRESERVING MEAT—AMUSEMENTS — DRESS — THE IGLOE, OR SNOW-HOUSE — THEIR CUISINE—DOGS—THE SLEDGE—CAIAK, OR CANOE—OUIMIAK, OR BOAT—IMPLEMENTS—STATURE.

THE Esquimaux are so totally different in physiognomy and person, in language, manners, and customs, from all the other natives of America, that there can be no doubt that they belong to a different branch of the human race. The conformation of their features, their stature, form, and complexion, approximate so closely to those of the northern inhabitants of Europe, as to indicate, with some degree of certainty, their identity of

origin. In the accounts I have read of the maritime Lapplanders, I find many characteristics common to both tribes: the Laplander is of a swarthy complexion,—so is the Esquimaux; the Laplander is distinguished by high cheek-bones, hollow cheeks, pointed chin, and large mouth,—so is the Esquimaux; the Laplander wears a thick beard,—so does the Esquimaux; the Laplander's hair is long and black,—so is that of the Esquimaux; the Lapplanders are, for the most part, short of stature,—so are the Esquimaux; and the dress, food, and lodging of both peoples are nearly the same. The last coincidence may possibly arise from similarity of location and climate; and, taken by itself, would afford no certain proof of identity of origin; but taken in connexion with the aforementioned characteristics, I think the conclusion is irresistible that the Lapplanders and Esquimaux are of the same race.

That the Esquimaux and the natives of Greenland are also of a kindred race, is a fact ascertained beyond a doubt, from the reports of the Moravian Missionaries, who have settlements among both

The way in which they must have passed from the one continent to the other must now be left to conjecture. There is nothing improbable in the supposition that some of them might have been drifted out to sea by stress of weather, and wafted to the shores of Greenland; whence some might, in course of time, remove to the opposite coast of America. From the southern extremity of Labrador to Behring's Straits, the Esquimaux language is the same, differing only in the pronunciation of a few words. We had a native of Hudson's Bay with us, who had accompanied Captain Franklin to the McKenzie and Coppermine Rivers, and who assured us that he understood the Esquimaux of that quarter, and those of Ungava, although some thousands of miles apart, as well as his own tribe.

In manners, customs, and dress, there is a like similarity. The Esquimaux have ever remained a distinct people; the other natives of America seeming to consider them more as brutes than human beings, and never approaching them unless for the purpose of knocking them on the

head. Every one's hand is against them. I have seen Esquimaux scalps, even among the timid *têtes des boules* of Temiscamingue; yet no people seem more disposed to live at peace with their neighbours, if only they were allowed. Circumstanced as they are, however, they are likely to suffer hostile aggression for a long time. Even a coward, with a musket in his hand, is generally an overmatch for a brave man with only a bow or a sling; but once possessed of fire-arms, they will teach their enemies to respect them, for they will undoubtedly have the advantage of superior courage and resolution.

The Esquimaux is not easily excited to anger; but his wrath once roused, he becomes furious: he foams like a wild boar, rolls his eyes, gnashes his teeth, and rushes on his antagonist with the fury of a beast of prey. In the winter of 1840, a quarrel arose between two individuals about the sex, which led to a fight; the struggle was continued for a time with tooth and nail; when one of the parties at length got hold of his knife, and stabbed his adversary in the belly. The bowels

protruded, yet the wounded man never desisted, until loss of blood and repeated stabs compelled him to yield the contest and his life. Gallantry seems to be the main cause of quarrels among them. Strange! that this passion should exercise such an influence in a climate, and, as one would be led to suppose, on constitutions so cold; yet nothing is more certain than that the enamoured Esquimaux will risk life and limb in the pursuit of his object.

With unmarried women there is no risk, as they are entirely free from control; not so with the married, who are under strict surveillance; but the husband's consent asked and obtained—which not seldom happens—saves the gallant's head, and the lady's reputation.

Their courtships are conducted in much the same manner as among the inland Indians, the choice of partners being entirely left to the parents. Some are affianced in childhood, and become man and wife in early youth: I have seen a boy of fourteen living with his wife who was two years younger. There are no marriage festivals, and no ceremonies of any kind are observed

at their nuptials. Polygamy is allowed, *ad libitum*; and the husband exercises his authority as husband, judge, or executioner; no one having any right to interfere. Should, however, the woman consider herself ill-treated, she flees to her parents, with whom she remains till an explanation takes place. If it lead to a reconciliation, the parties are reunited; if not, the woman may form a new connexion whenever she pleases.

I know not whether the Esquimaux can be said to have any idea of religion, as the term is generally understood. The earth, say they, was in the beginning covered with water, which having subsided, man appeared — a spontaneous creation. Aglooktook is the name of the man who first created fish and animals: chopping a tree which overhung the sea, the chips that fell into that element became fish; those that fell on the land, animals. Their paradise is beneath the great deep; those who have lived a good life, proceed to a part of the sea abounding with whales and seals, where, free from care and toil, they fare sumptuously on raw flesh and blubber, *in secula*

seculorum. The wicked, on the contrary, are condemned to take up their abode in a " sea of troubles," where none of the delicacies enjoyed by the blessed are to be found; and even the commonest necessaries are procured with endless toil, and pain, and disappointment. Although the " tomakhs," or dead men, become the inhabitants of the sea, they indulge in the pleasures of the chase on their old element, whenever they please; and are often heard calling to each other while in pursuit of the deer.

The Esquimaux have their " men of medicine," in whose preternatural powers they place the most implicit confidence; by working on the superstitious fears of the people, these impostors obtain much authority. They are allowed to take the lead in every affair of importance; and, in short, all their movements are, in a great measure, regulated by these harlequins, who appear to be the only chiefs among them.

They dispose of their dead by placing them on the rocks, and covering them over with ice or stones; these tombs prove but feeble barriers

against the wolves and other beasts of prey, who soon carry off the bodies. The property belonging to the deceased is placed by the side of his grave; —his caiak, or skin canoe, his bows, arrows, and spears. Thus equipped, the *emigrant* spirit cannot find itself at a loss on arriving at a better country!

It is said by some that the Esquimaux abandon their aged parents: from inquiry, as well as observation, I am led to believe there is no foundation for the charge. It is not reasonable to expect that the more refined feelings of humanity should be found in the breast of a savage, or that he should honour his father and mother in the same degree as he whose principles are moulded by the precepts of Christianity; yet I must do them the justice to say, that they appeared to me to treat their parents with as much kindness, at least, as any other savage nation I have met with. They do not deny, however, that old people no longer able to provide for themselves, and without any relative to care for them, are sometimes left to perish.

No people suffer more from hunger than the Esquimaux who inhabit the shores of Ungava Bay; seals being extremely scarce in the winter season, and no fish to be found; so that the poor creatures are often reduced to the most revolting expedients to preserve life. An Esquimaux, who had been about the post for two years, proceeded, in the winter of 1839, to join some of his relatives along the coast. When he returned in the ensuing spring, I observed that his mother and one of his children were missing. On inquiring what had become of them, he replied, that they had been starved to death, and that he and the rest of his family would have shared their fate, had it not been for the sustenance the bodies afforded.

The Esquimaux always pass the winter near the element that yields them their principal subsistence; and as they are unacquainted with the use of snow-shoes, they cannot follow the deer any distance from the coast. As soon as the rivers are free from ice in summer, they

proceed inland and find abundance of food. Their manner of preserving their meat is quite characteristic. When an animal is killed the bowels are extracted, then the fore and hind quarters are cut off, and being placed inside the carcass, are secured by skewers of wood run through the flesh. The whole is then deposited under the nearest cleft of rock, and stones are built round so as to secure it from the depredations of wild animals until the hunters return to the coast; when the meat is in high flavour, and considered fit for the palate of an Esquimaux epicure.

The Esquimaux do not share their provisions as the Nascopies do, although they relieve each other's wants when their means can afford it: each individual engaged in the chase retains his own game, his claim being ascertained by distinctive marks on the arrows. When a whale is killed a rigid fast is observed for twenty-four hours, not in gratitude to Providence, but in honour of the whale, which is highly displeased

when this is neglected, studiously avoiding the harpoon afterwards, and even visiting the offender with sickness and other misfortunes.

Should the summer and fall hunt prove successful, the Esquimaux is one of the happiest animals in the creation. He passes his dreary winter without one careful or anxious thought; he eats his fill and lies down to sleep, and then rises to eat again. In this manner they pass the greater part of their time; night and day are the same, eating and sleeping their chief enjoyments. When, however, they do rouse their dormant faculties to exertion, they seem to engage with great good-will in the few amusements they have, the principal of which is playing ball, men and women joining in the game. Two parties are opposed, the one driving the ball with sticks towards the goal, the other driving it in the opposite direction; in short, a game of shinty. They have dancing too,—ye gods! such dancing! Two rows of men and women, sometimes only of one sex, stand opposite to each other, exhibiting no other motion in their dancing than raising

their shoulders with a peculiar jerk, bending their knees so as to give their whole bodies, from the knee upwards, the same motion, and grinning horribly at each other, while not a foot stirs.

As to the music to which this *dance* is performed, I know not well how to describe it. By inflating and depressing the lungs so as to create a convulsive heaving of the breast, a sound is produced, somewhat similar to the groans of a person suffering from suffocation; and it is to this sound they grin, and jerk their shoulders. The whole performance is quite in keeping; the music worthy of the dancing, the dancing worthy of the music. They have boxing too, but do not practise the art after the fashion of the Cribs and Coopers; they disdain to parry off the blow; each strikes in turn with clenched fist; the blow is given behind the ear, and, as soon as one of the parties acknowledges himself defeated, the combat ceases. They are also adepts at wrestling; I have witnessed frequent contests between them and the inland Indians, when the latter were invariably floored.

No one enjoys a joke better than an Esquimaux, and when his risibility is excited he laughs with right good will, evincing in this, as in every other respect, the difference of disposition between them and the Indians, whose rigid features seldom betray their feelings. Much the same diversity of character and disposition is to be observed among the Esquimaux as among other barbarous tribes. Some instances of disinterested kindness and generosity fell under my notice while residing among them, that would have done honour to civilized man.

An Esquimaux who had attached himself to the establishment from the time of our first arrival at Ungava, kept a poor widow and her three orphans with him for several years, and seemed to make no difference between them and the members of his own family. It must be acknowledged, however, that the unhappy widows seldom fall into so good hands; their fate is the most wretched that can be imagined, unless they have children that can provide for them. In years of scarcity

they are rejected from the community, and hover about the encampments like starving wolves, picking up whatever chance may throw in their way, until hunger and cold terminate their wretched existence.

Whatever may be said of the awkwardness of the Esquimaux dress, it must be allowed to be the best adapted to the climate that could be used: a pair of boots so skilfully sewed as to exclude the water, and lined with down, or the fine hair of the rein-deer, protects the feet from wet and cold; two pairs of trousers, the inner having the hair next the skin; and two coats or tunics of deer or seal skin, the outer having a large hood that is drawn over the head in stormy weather, and a pair of large mits, complete the dress. The women also "wear the breeks," their dress being similar to that of the men in every respect, with this difference, that the female has a long flap attached to the hind part of her coat, and falling down to her heels; a most extraordinary ornament, giving her the appearance of an enormous

tadpole. This tail, however, has its use; when she has occasion to sit down on the cold rocks she folds it up and makes a seat of it.

In the winter season the Esquimaux live in huts built of snow; and we may imagine what must have been the necessity and distress that could first have suggested to a human being the idea of using such a material as a means of protecting himself from cold. Be that as it may, the snow *igloe* affords not only security from the inclemency of the weather, but more comfort than either stone or wooden building without fire. The operation requires considerable tact and experience, and is always performed by the men, two being required for it, one outside and the other inside.

Blocks of snow are first cut out with some sharp instrument from the spot that is intended to form the floor of the dwelling, and raised on edge, inclining a little inward around the cavity. These blocks are generally about two feet in length, two feet in breadth, and eight inches thick, and are joined close together. In this manner the edifice

is erected, contracting at each successive tier, until there only remains a small aperture at the top, which is filled by a slab of clear ice, that serves both as a keystone to the arch, and a window to light the dwelling. An embankment of snow is raised around the wall, and covered with skins, which answers the double purpose of beds and seats. The inside of the hut presents the figure of an arch or dome; the usual dimensions are ten or twelve feet in diameter, and about eight feet in height at the centre. Sometimes two or three families congregate under the same roof, having separate apartments communicating with the main building, that are used as bedrooms. The entrance to the igloe is effected through a winding covered passage, which stands open by day, but is closed up at night by placing slabs of ice at the angle of each bend, and thus the inmates are perfectly secured against the severest cold.

The Esquimaux use no fuel in winter; their stone lamps afford sufficient heat to dry their boots and clothes, or warm their blubber and raw

meat when they are so inclined. They are inured to cold by early habit; the children are carried about in the hoods of their mothers' jackets until three years of age; during this period they remain without a stitch of clothing, and the little things may be sometimes seen standing up in their nests, exposing themselves in the coldest weather, without appearing to suffer any inconvenience from it. The Esquimaux never sleep with their clothes on, not even when without any other shelter than the cleft of a rock.

It is well known that they eat their food, whether fish or flesh, generally in a raw state; hence their appellation, "Ashkimai," in the Cree and Sauteux, means, eater of raw meat, and is doubtless the origin of the name Esquimaux first applied by the earlier French discoverers, and since then passed into general use. They sometimes, indeed, warm their food in a stone kettle over a stone lamp, but they seem to relish it equally well when cut warm from the carcase of an animal recently killed, which they may be seen devouring while yet quivering with life.

In winter they prefer raw meat, especially fish, which is considered a great delicacy in a frozen state; the Esquimaux stomach, in fact, rejects nothing, raw or boiled, that affords sustenance. Like the inland Indians, they can bear hunger for an amazing length of time, and afterwards gorge themselves with more than brutal voracity without suffering inconvenience by it.

The Esquimaux breed of dogs are wolves in a domesticated state, the same in every characteristic, save such differences as may be expected to result from their relative conditions; the dog howls, never barks. These animals are of the most essential service to their masters, and are maintained at no expense. How they manage to subsist appears inexplicable to me; not a morsel of food is ever offered to them at the camp, and when employed hauling sledges on a journey, a small piece of blubber given them in the evening enables them to perform the laborious work of the ensuing day.

From ten to fifteen dogs are employed on a long journey. They are harnessed separately by a

collar and a single trace passing over their back, and fastened to the fore-part of the sledge. The traces are so arranged that the dogs generally follow in a line, conducted by a leader, who is trained to obey the word of command in an instant; the least hesitation on his part brings the merciless whip about his ears. The lash is about fifteen feet in length, the handle eighteen inches; continual practice enables the Esquimaux to wield this instrument of torture with great dexterity. The sledges are about five feet in length and two in breadth; the runners generally shod with whalebone or ivory, and coated over with a plaster of earth and water, which becomes very smooth, and is renewed as often as it is worn out.

The Esquimaux *carak*, or canoe, is about twelve feet in length, and two feet in breadth, and tapers off from the centre to the bow and stern, almost to a mere point. The frame is of wood covered with seal-skin, having an aperture in the centre which barely admits of the stowage of the nether man. These canoes are calculated for the accom-

modation of one person only; yet it is possible for a passenger to embark upon them, if he can submit to the inconvenience—and risk—of lying at full length on his belly, without ever stirring hand or foot, as the least motion would upset the canoe. Instances, however, have been known of persons conveyed hundreds of miles in this manner. These canoes are used solely for hunting; and, by means of the double paddle, are propelled through the water with the velocity of the dolphin; no land animal can possibly escape when seen in the water; the least exertion is sufficient to keep up with the rein-deer when swimming at its utmost speed. When the animal is overtaken, it is driven towards the spot where the huntsman wishes to land, and there despatched by a thrust of the spear.

The Esquimaux of this quarter have not the art of recovering their position, when they upset. An accident of this kind is, therefore, sure to prove fatal, unless aid be at hand. It is seldom, however, that aid is wanting, for these accidents never happen except in the excitement of the

sport, especially harpooning whales, when there are always a number present. The *ouimiack*, or skin-boat, is a clumsy-looking contrivance, but not to be despised on that account; from the buoyancy of the materials of which it is built, the ouimiack stands a much heavier sea than our best sea-boat. This kind of craft is rowed by women, and used for the purpose of conveying families along the coast.

The few implements these people use for hunting or fishing, display much taste and ingenuity. Their caiaks are proportioned with mathematical exactness, the paddles often tastefully inlaid with ivory; their spears are neatly carved, and their bows are far superior to any I have seen among the interior tribes, combining strength and elasticity in an eminent degree.

Their mode of capturing the white whale is exfremely ingenious. A large *dan*, or seal-skin inflated with wind, is attached to the harpoon by a thong some twenty feet in length. The moment the fish is struck the *dan* is thrown overboard, and being dragged through the water,

offers so great a resistance to the movement of the fish that it soon becomes exhausted by the exertion, and when it emerges lies exposed on the water, to take rest ere it dive again. The Esquimaux then approaches from behind, and often secures his game with one thrust of the spear. The Esquimaux also uses a javelin with considerable skill, and some are so dexterous in the use of the sling as to bring down wild fowl on the wing.

The complexion of the Esquimaux is swarthy; I have seen some of their children, however, as fair as the children of the fairest people in Europe, yet these become as dark as their parents when advanced in years. This circumstance cannot be accounted for by filthiness or exposure to the weather; for I have observed, on the coast of Labrador, the descendants of an Esquimaux mother and a European father of the third generation as dark as the pure Esquimaux; and these, too, enjoyed the comforts of civilized life, were cleanly in their persons, and not more exposed to the weather than others.

The Esquimaux are low of stature, but I do not think the epithet "dwarfish" applies to them with propriety. With the view of ascertaining this point, I once took five men promiscuously from a party of twenty, and found their average height to be 5 feet 5 inches. Some individuals of the remainder measured 5 feet 7 or 8 inches, and one exceeded 6 feet. The fact is, the Esquimaux are generally thicker than Europeans; their peculiar dress also adds greatly to their bulk, so that they appear shorter than they really are. They are so bound up in their seal-skin garments that their movements are necessarily much impeded by them, we can, therefore, form no idea of their agility; but I do not hesitate to say that their strength exceeds that of any other nation on the continent.

The Esquimaux features are far from being disagreeable; some females I observed among them whose expression of countenance was extremely prepossessing, and who would pass for "bonnie lasses" even among the whites, if divested of their filth and uncouth dress, and rigged out in

European habiliments. The women fasten their hair in a knot on the crown of the head, and anoint it with rancid oil in lieu of pomatum; they also tattoo their faces, with the view, no doubt, of enhancing their charms in the estimation of their blubber-eating lovers. Their teeth are remarkably white and regular; the eyes are black, and partake more of the circular than the oval form; the cheek-bones are prominent, forehead low, mouth large, and chin pointed.

The Esquimaux generally enjoy good health, and no epidemic diseases, as far as I could learn, are known among them.

CHAPTER XI.

LABRADOR—ESQUIMAUX HALF-BREEDS—MORAVIAN BRETHREN —EUROPEAN INHABITANTS — THEIR VIRTUES—CLIMATE— ANECDOTE.

THE country denominated Labrador, extends from Esquimaux Bay, on the Straits of Belleisle, to the extremity of the continent, Cape Chudleigh, at the entrance of Hudson's Strait. The interior is inhabited by two tribes of Indians, Mountaineers and Nascopies, members of the Cree family. The coast was inhabited at one time by Esquimaux only, but the southern part is now peopled by a mongrel race of Esquimaux half-breeds, a few vagabond Esquimaux, and some English and Canadian fishermen and trappers, who are assimilated to the natives in manners and in mode of life. While the European inhabitants adopt from necessity some of the native customs,

the natives have adopted so much of the European customs that their primitive characteristics are no longer distinguishable; they cook their victuals, drink rum, smoke and chew tobacco, and generally dress after the European manner, especially the females, who always wear gowns. They have also a smattering of French and English, and are great proficients in swearing in both languages; nor do they seem ignorant of the more refined arts of cheating, lying, and deceiving. Taking everything into account, however, we may be surprised that their manners are not more corrupt, than they are.

A number of small trading vessels from the United States hover about the coast during summer; the accursed "fire-water" constitutes a primary article in their outfit, and is bartered freely for such commodities as the natives may possess. These adventurers are generally men of loose principles, and are ever ready to take the advantage of their customers. The natives, however, are now so well instructed, that they are more likely to cheat than be cheated.

The Esquimaux, inhabiting the northern parts of the coast differ in every respect from their neighbours of the south. They have acquired a knowledge of the Christian religion, together with some of the more useful arts of civilized life, without losing much of their primitive simplicity. The Moravian Brethren, those faithful "successors of the Apostles," after enduring inconceivable hardships and privations for many years, without the least prospect of success, at length succeeded in converting the heathens, collecting them in villages around them, and at the same time not only instructing them in things pertaining to their eternal salvation, but in everything else that could contribute to their comfort and happiness in the present life. There are four different stations of the Brethren; Hopedale, Nain, O'Kok, and Hebron. At each station there is a church, store, dwelling-house for the Missionaries, and workshops for native tradesmen. The natives are lodged in houses built after the model of their *igloes*, being the best adapted to the climate and circumstances of the country, where scarcely

any fuel is to be had: the Missionaries warm their houses by means of stoves.

The Brethren have much the same influence with their flocks as a father among his children. Whatever provisions the natives collect are placed at their disposal, and by them afterwards distributed in such a manner as to be of the most general benefit; by thus taking the management of this important matter into their own hands, the consequences of waste and improvidence are guarded against, and the means of subsistence secured.

In years of great scarcity the Brethren open their own stores, having always an ample supply of provisions on hand, so that through their fostering care the natives never suffer absolute want. The Brethren have also goods for trading, which they dispose of at a moderate profit; the profits accruing from the business are thrown into the general funds of the institution. It is said they carry on trade in every part of the world where they have missions. Their object is not to acquire wealth for selfish purposes, but to

extend the kingdom of Christ on earth; to enlighten the nations; and by instructing them in the knowledge of Divine truth, to "ameliorate their condition" in this life, and secure their eternal happiness in the life to come.

From the paternal anxiety with which these good people watch over the morals of their flocks, they discourage as much as possible the visits of strangers; fearing that intercourse with them might open their eyes to the allurements of vice. In spite of all their vigilance, however, they have sometimes to deplore the loss of a stray sheep. It is an established rule, moreover, with them, never to allow a stranger to sleep within their gates; he is hospitably received and treated with kindness and attention, but on the approach of evening he is apprised that he must shift for himself: care is taken, however, to provide him with lodgings in one of the native huts, where he can pass the night in tolerable comfort. Should he not be pleased with his treatment, he is at liberty to depart when he pleases.

The European inhabitants of Labrador are for

the most part British sailors, who, preferring the freedom of a semi-barbarous life and the society of a brown squaw, to the severity of maritime discipline and the endearments of the civilized fair, take up their abode for life in this land of desolation.

In course of time the gay frolicksome sailor settles down into the regular grave father of a family; and by sobriety and good conduct, may ultimately secure a comfortable home for his old age. Jack's characteristic thoughtlessness, however, sometimes adheres to him even when moored on dry land; and when this is the case, his situation is truly miserable.

They pass the summer in situations favourable for catching salmon, which they barter on the spot with the stationary traders for such commodities as they are in want of. When the salmon fishing is at an end, they proceed to the coast for the purpose of fishing cod for their own consumption, and return late in autumn to the interior, where they pass the winter trapping fur animals.

The planters, as they are designated, live in houses which they call "tilts," varying in shape and size according to the taste or circumstances of the owner. These buildings are generally formed of stakes driven into the ground, chinked with moss, and covered with bark; they are always warmed with stoves, otherwise the *igloe* would afford more comfort.

The half-breeds live in much the same way as their European progenitors; they are generally sober and industrious; and although unacquainted with any particular form of religious worship, they evince, in their general deportment, a greater regard to the precepts of Christianity than many who call themselves Christians. They are entirely free from the crimes that disgrace civilized life, and are guilty of few of its vices; should a frail fair, however, make a *faux pas*, it is no bar to her forming a matrimonial connexion afterwards. The women are much fewer than the men, and on this account a greater indulgence may be extended to their faults than otherwise would be.

I was surprised to find them all able to read

and write, although without schools or school-masters. The task of teaching devolves upon the mother; should she (what seldom happens) be unqualified, a neighbour is always ready to impart the desired instruction.

The Esquimaux half-breeds are both industrious and ingenious; they are at a loss for nothing. The men make their own boats, and the women prepare everything required for domestic convenience; almost every man is his own blacksmith and carpenter, and every woman a tailor and shoemaker. They seem to possess all the virtues of the different races from which they are sprung—except courage; they are generally allowed to be more timid than the natives. But if not courageous, they possess virtues that render courage less necessary; they avoid giving offence, and are seldom, therefore, injured by others.

The Hudson's Bay Company obtained a footing here a few years ago, by buying out some of the petty traders, whose operations extended to the interior, and consequently interfered with the hopeful Ungava scheme; independently, however,

of this consideration, expectations were entertained that Labrador might become the seat of a profitable branch of the business, from its various resources in fish, oil, and furs. These expectations were not realized, owing to the strong competition the Company met with; while their interference in the trade subjected them to the charge of "grasping ambition," a charge which appears but too well founded, considering the monopoly they possess of the whole fur trade of the continent. "Plus le D——e a, plus il voudrait avoir," is an old adage; nor have we any reason to believe that any other mercantile body would be less ambitious of increasing their gains, than their *honours* of Fenchurch-street.

There are several establishments along the coast, belonging chiefly to merchants from Plymouth and Dartmouth, who carry on the salmon and cod fisheries on an extensive scale, and traffic also with the planters. This business was at one time considered very lucrative; of late years, however, competition has increased from all quarters, and prices in the European market

have diminished, so that the profits are now greatly reduced.

The climate of the southern section of Labrador is by no means severe; the thermometer, even in the coldest months of the year, seldom falling lower than 30° below zero. Along the shores of Esquimaux Bay, a few spots have been found favourable for agriculture, and potatoes and other culinary vegetables have been raised in abundance. Grain, especially oats and barley, would doubtless also thrive; it so happens, however, that the inhabitants are under the necessity of devoting their attention to other pursuits during the season of husbandry; so that the few that attempt "gardening," derive small benefit from it. They sow their seed before starting for the coast, and leave nature to do the rest.

I shall close my description of Labrador by narrating a rather tragical event that occurred a few years ago. An old fisherman, formerly a sailor, and his only son by an Esquimaux squaw, lived together in the greatest amity and concord. The son, after the death of his mother, attended

to domestic affairs, and also assisted his father at out-door's work. As the fishing season approached, however, it was considered expedient to hire a female, so that they might give their undivided attention to the fishing. The girl had not remained long with them, when her charms began to make an impression on Jack's still sensitive heart; the son also became enamoured; both paid their addresses, and, as a matter of course, the young man was preferred.

The demon of jealousy now took possession of the father's breast; and his conduct became so violent and cruel, that his son determined on parting company with him and carrying off the girl. Seizing the only boat that belonged to his father, he slipped away under cover of night with his companion, and put ashore on the first island they found. A violent storm arose in the course of the night, and either dashed the boat to pieces on the rocks, or carried her out to sea; and thus the unfortunate lovers were left to their fate. This event happened late in autumn. The winter passed without any word being heard of the

lovers; in the ensuing spring their bodies were found clasped in each other's arms, and the young man's gun close by with fifteen notches cut in the stock, supposed to mark the number of days they suffered ere relieved by death.

CHAPTER XII.

VOYAGE TO ENGLAND—ARRIVAL AT PLYMOUTH—REFLECTIONS —ARRIVE AT THE PLACE OF MY NATIVITY—CHANGES—DEPOPULATION—LONDON—THE THAMES—LIVERPOOL—EMBARK FOR NEW YORK—ARRIVAL—THE AMERICANS—ENGLISH AND AMERICAN TOURISTS—ENGLAND AND AMERICA—NEW YORK.

1842.—I EMBARKED for England on the 18th of August, on board a small schooner of sixty tons, deeply laden with fish and oil. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the accommodations the craft afforded were of the meanest kind; but the inconveniences weighed lightly in the scales, when compared with the anticipated delight of visiting one's native land. We had a very fine passage; a steady fair breeze carried us across the broad Atlantic in a fortnight. The green hills of Cornwall came in view on the 1st of September, and I had the satisfaction of treading the soil of England early on the 3d.

I remained a few days at Plymouth, to feast my eyes on scenery such as I had long been a stranger to;—scenery, I may say, unrivalled by any I had ever beheld at home or abroad. What spot in the world, in fact, can present such varied charms, as the summit of Mount Edgecumb? where the most refined taste, aided by the amplest means, has been employed for a thousand years in beautifying the glorious landscape. To me, just arrived from *Ungava*, the beauties of the scene were undoubtedly heightened by the contrast; and one short visit to Mount Edgecumb effaced from my mind the dreary prospect of bleak rocks, snow banks, and icebergs, with which it had been so long and so sadly familiar, and inspired it with a rapture and delight to which it had long been a stranger. Yet this terrestrial paradise, I am informed, belongs to a noble lord, who is a miserable invalid. Alas, for poor humanity! neither wealth nor grandeur preserve their possessors from the ills that flesh is heir to: and this nobleman, may, perhaps, envy the lot of the

humblest individual that visits his enchanting domain.

Bidding adieu to Plymouth, and its delightful environs, I set out for London on the 11th of September. The desire of home, however, now urged me forward; so that even the wonders of this wonderful city could not detain me. Passing over the uninteresting incidents of steamboat and railroad travelling, I arrived on the 20th of September at the spot from which I had started twenty-three years before. The meeting of a mother with an only son, after so long an absence, need not be described, nor the feelings the well-known scenes of youthful sports and youthful joys gave rise to. These scenes were still the same, as far as the hand of Nature was concerned:—there stood the lofty Benmore, casting his sombre shades over the glassy surface of Lochba, as in the days of yore; there were also the same heath-covered hills and wooded dells, well stocked with sheep and cattle; but the human inhabitants of the woods and dells—where were they?—far distant from their much-

loved native land in the wilds of America, or toiling for a miserable existence in the crowded cities of the Lowlands,—a sad change! The bleating of sheep, and lowing of cattle, for the glad voices of a numerous population, happy and contented with their lot, loyal to their sovereign, and devotedly attached to their chiefs! But loyalty and attachment are but fancies, which, in these utilitarian and trading days, are flat and unprofitable; yet the aristocratical manufacturers of beef and mutton may live to feel the truth of the lines of Goldsmith:—

> "But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
> When once destroyed, can never be supplied."

I remained about six weeks in my native country, and set out for London, where I arrived early in November,—"the beginning of the gay season;" but it appeared to me the reverse. The city was shrouded in a cloud of condensed smoke and fog, that shut out the light of heaven. During three whole days the obscurity was so great that the steamboats were prevented from plying on the Thames, and the gas-lights were

seen glimmering through the windows at noon-day. How applicable is the description of the Roman historian to the Rome of our day:—"Caput orbis terrarum, urbis magnificentiam augebant, fora, templa, porticas, aquæductus, theatra, horti denique, et ejus generis alia, ad quæ vel lecta animus stupet." My time was too limited, however, and the weather too unfavourable, to admit of my seeing all the "lions;" but who would think of leaving London without visiting that wonderful work—the Tunnel,—that lasting monument of the genius of a Brunell, and of the wealth and enterprise of British merchants!

A Cockney may well boast of his great city, its wealth, its vast population, and its magnificent buildings; but with regard to the Thames, of which he is equally proud,—he that has seen the St. Lawrence, the Hudson, the McKenzie, and many others, compared to which the Thames is but a rivulet, may be excused if he cannot view its not very limpid waters with the same extravagant admiration as the Londoner, who calls the Serpentine a river, and dignifies a pond of

a few roods in extent with the name of a lake. Yet there is one feature about the Thames, of which he can scarcely be too proud, and which is unparalleled perhaps in the world,—the often-noticed "forest of masts," extending farther than the eye can reach, and suggesting,—not the silence and solitude of the forests with which I have been familiar,—but the countless population, the wealth, and the grandeur of Britain; and the might and the majesty of civilized and industrious man.

I took leave of London on the 12th of September, and set out for Liverpool by railroad, and reached it in six hours. I had sufficient time to visit its docks, crowded by the ships of every nation; its warehouses containing the produce of every clime; and, though last, not least in my estimation, the splendid monument erected to the memory of Nelson. No monument of stone or brass is necessary to perpetuate our hero's fame; he lives in the heart of every true Briton, and will ever live, till British oak and British prowess shall cease to "rule the waves."

I embarked on the 15th of December on board a sailing-packet bound for New York. These vessels are so punctual to the hour of sailing advertised, that, if the wind proves contrary, and blows fresh, they are towed out to sea by steam-boats. This proved to be our case, and we kept tacking about in the "chops" of the Channel for six days, when a fair wind sprung up that soon carried us out of sight of England. England! great and glorious country, adieu! I shall probably never see thee more; but in quitting thy white-cliffed shores, I quit not my ardent attachment and veneration for thee;—and now for *thy* eldest daughter beyond the ocean!

To me, who had spent so much of my lifetime in solitude, the tedium of the voyage so much complained of was gaiety itself; with three fellow-passengers besides the captain, the time passed very agreeably. On board these floating palaces a passenger, in fact, finds everything that can contribute to his comfort; the best of accommodation, the best of fare, and the best of attendance; so that there is nothing wanting but

stability, to make him fancy himself in a first-class hotel on shore.

The weather proved extremely favourable throughout the passage; not an incident occurred worthy of notice; and on the 17th of January, 1843, I landed safely at New York, and thus found myself for the first time in a foreign land; and, since fate has so decreed, among a foreign people. Yes! they are foreigners, if being called by another name, and living under a different form of government can make them so; yet in language, in laws, in religion, and in blood, we are the same. Their ancestors brought abroad with them the same sentiments of regard and attachment to their native land as we feel; they rejoiced in the prosperity of Britain; felt proud of her victories, and grieved at her misfortunes. Alas, how different the feelings of the present race! Britain may, in fact, reckon the Americans of the present day her most inveterate foes; those who are of our own kindred, and whom therefore we might expect to stand by us in our hour of need, regard us with more envy and hatred than

the "hereditary foes" with whom we have been for centuries engaged in mortal strife.

In resisting the arbitrary acts of a misguided government, the American people only proved themselves possessed of the same noble spirit that procured for their English progenitors the confirmation of Magna Charta, and that hurled a tyrant from his throne. The heroes of the American revolution nobly fought and conquered; they entered the arena with fearful odds against them; they continued the struggle under every disadvantage, save the sacredness of their cause; and finally won the prize for which they contended. Of that prize the Americans of the present day have undisputed possession; and nothing can be more certain than that the Britons of the present day have no wish to deprive them of it—even if they could. What cause, then, can there be for still cherishing those feelings of animosity which the unhappy disruption gave rise to? If our fathers quarrelled, cannot we be friends? But are not the British themselves to blame, in some measure, for the continuance of

these irritated feelings? The mercenary pens of prejudiced, narrow-minded individuals contribute daily to add fuel to the flame. Our "Diaries," and our "Notes," replete with offensive remarks, are, from the cheapness of publication, disseminated through the length and breadth of the Union, and are in everybody's hands; and those foolish remarks are supposed to be the sentiments of the British nation; when they are in fact only the sentiments of individuals whose opinions are little valued at home, and ought to be less valued abroad.

Circumstances taken into consideration, I think it very unfair to draw comparisons between the social condition of young America, just become a distinct nation, and of old England, whose empire has lasted a thousand years. The American people are still too much occupied with the necessaries of life to devote much of their time to its elegancies; they are still engaged in the pursuits that ultimately ensure wealth and real independence. Those results attained, what is there to prevent the American gentleman from

becoming as polished and accomplished as his cousin in Britain? Can it be supposed, with the least shadow of reason, that the short period that has elapsed since the Revolution can have been sufficient to produce that alteration in the character and manners of the Americans, which our travellers love to exercise their wit upon? It is impossible. The Americans "guessed," and "calculated," and "speculated," while they were British subjects, just as they do now; nor have they learned to chew, and spit, and smoke tobacco since the 4th of July, 1782.

As to the peculiar phrases the Americans use in conversation, I am convinced that their forefathers brought the greater part of them from Britain, as many of those phrases are to be found in the works of old English authors still extant. The English language as spoken in America, is elegance itself, compared to the provincial dialects of Britain, or even to the vile slang one hears in the streets of London. This is a fact that every unprejudiced person who has travelled in America must admit.

It appears Americans find leisure, of late years,

to travel and take notes, as well as their transatlantic brethren; and, in return for the polite attentions of our travellers, describe England and Englishmen in the bitter language of recrimination and retort; and thus the enmity between the mother and daughter is kept alive and perpetuated. A publication of this kind fell lately into my hands, entitled, "The Glory and Shame of England." The writer, said to be a *Christian minister*, with the malignity of baser minds, sinks and keeps in the background her "glories," and brings into relief and dwells upon her shameful parts; representing in the most sombre colours the misery of the "squalid" population of our cities. Would to God there were not so much truth in the picture! His reverence, however, seems to have lost sight of the clergyman; and in gratifying his resentment against England, and in his zeal to kindle the same unchristian feeling in the breasts of his countrymen, has not hesitated to sacrifice the truth;—and he a clergyman, whose office it is to "proclaim peace on earth, and good-will to men!"

That there is much misery and wretchedness

in England, none can deny; but will not the well-informed philanthropist consider it rather as our misfortune than our reproach?—consisting mainly, as that mass of wretchedness does, of those ills which neither "kings nor laws can cause or cure." What plan would this philanthropic divine recommend to remove those evils, which, while he affects to deplore, he yet glories over? Strip the nobility and land-owners of their possessions — convert our monarchy into a republic—and the church into a "meetin ouse?"

These *reforms* effected, would the people of England be permanently benefited by them? Supposing the whole arable soil of England were divided in equal portions among its crowded inhabitants, (passing by the injustice of robbing the present proprietors of their lawful possessions—many of them acquired by the same hard labour or skill by which an artisan gains his weekly wages,) would the equality of property long continue? Would not the sloth, improvidence, and imprudence, that ever distinguish a great proportion of mankind; and the industry,

foresight, and ambition that characterise others, soon bring many of the equal lots into one, thus forming a great estate, the property of an individual,—when matters would just be at the point where his reverence found them? And then, of course, would follow another "equitable adjustment," to relieve the wants of the poor, whose progenitors had squandered their patrimony. Or, admitting that the lots remained in possession of the families to whom they were originally granted, would the produce be equal to the maintenance of their numerous descendants, when the property became divided and subdivided into fifty or a hundred shares?

The present proprietors of the soil of England have, undoubtedly, large incomes; but what becomes of those incomes? Do they not flow back into the hands of the merchants, tradesmen, servants, &c.?—the greater proportion, at least; for the sums expended by our tourists on the continent form so inconsiderable a portion of those incomes, as not to be worth mentioning. The same may be said of the *alleged* wealth of

the clergy; for (admitting the allegation) it all flows back into the channels whence it issued; and, although neither belonging to the Church of England, nor approving of her forms of government, I do not think that her downfall would improve the *temporal* condition of the people. If we wish to remain a Christian nation, we cannot dispense with the services of the clergy; and in order that those services may be efficient, they must be maintained in independence and respectability.

As to a republican form of government, that experiment has been already tried in England, and failed; it may be tried again with no better success. The circumstances in which the American people found themselves after the Revolution, rendered the adoption of republican institutions both safe and beneficial. They had learned by experience that the remote position of their country secured their independence from the ambitious projects of any power in Europe; while they had nothing to fear from any power in America. Thus situated, any form of go-

vernment, consistent with the due maintenance of good order at home, answered their purpose. The nascent republic might, at the period in question, have adopted as its motto, "Liberty and Equality," with the utmost propriety; for all enjoyed equal liberty, and nearly equal fortunes. Experience, however, shows that liberty and equality cannot long exist under any form of government; industry procures wealth, wealth induces ambition, and ambition sighs after distinction and power.

While America feels secure from the aggression of her neighbours, Great Britain is surrounded by powerful states, some of whom afford her daily proofs of their envy of her greatness and their hatred of her power; and only want the ability, not the will, to annihilate both. Those states are, for the most part, ruled by absolute or despotic governments, who can call fleets and armies into action without losing a moment in debating the justice or injustice, policy or impolicy, of their movements. With such neighbours as these, would the Messenger of Peace recommend the "Britishers" to adopt a form of government

which would necessitate them to debate and consult while their enemies were acting; and to remit to the people to discuss the question of peace or war, when they should be enlisting and drilling them?

Columbia, happy land! the broad Atlantic intervenes between thee and the envy or hatred of Europe; thy wide domain, presenting millions of acres of untenanted land, stands open to the industry and enterprise of thy citizens. How thankful, then, ought they to be for the blessings they enjoy, compared with the condition of their brethren "beyond the water," confined as they are to the narrow limits of their sea-girt isle, whose soil is no longer sufficient for the support of its over-crowded inhabitants, and surrounded by hostile nations, who have long since pronounced the sentence, "*Delenda est Britannia!*"

"Boz" has already told his countrymen all that is worth telling about New York, and something more. What the "Dickens" brought him to the "Five Points?" Did he never visit Wapping with the same views, whatever they might be? If he

did, did he observe nothing in that sink of filth and wickedness equal to the scenes that shocked him so much in the outskirts of New York? One just arrived from England finds little in this city to excite wonder or admiration, unless it be the extraordinary width of some of the streets. Were those streets kept clean, and the liberty of the pigs a little restrained, the citizens might well boast of their superiority to most of the streets of our British cities; and as their taste improves, everything unsightly will be removed.

Nature has done much for New York: she possesses one of the finest harbours in the world; her climate is pleasant and salubrious; and one of the noblest rivers of America gives her the command of the commercial resources of a country which equals in extent nearly all Europe. New York will undoubtedly become one of the first cities in the world; in commerce, in wealth, in population, she has advanced at a prodigious rate within the last fifty years, and her progress is not likely to be arrested.

The aqueduct that supplies the town with water,

pure, wholesome, and abundant, is well worth the notice of a stranger. This stupendous work was executed at a cost of nine millions of dollars, and conveys the water from a distance of forty miles!—the genius of the engineer and the power of money overcoming every obstacle. The two great reservoirs, near the city, present splendid specimens of that kind of architecture. Happening in company to express my opinion of this work, as reflecting the highest credit on the enterprise of the citizens, a gentleman present, evidently an American, in reply to the compliment, observed, "It is very much to their advantage, no doubt, and it will also be much to their credit, if they pay the debt they incurred in constructing it." The fact is, that this and many other public works in the United States, have been executed by British capital. Would to heaven that our *sympathising* friends, who are so jealous in regard to the honour of America, where a few thousand acres of worthless land are concerned, were equally jealous in regard to it when, under the newly-invented name of *repudiation*, the honour of their country is

tarnished by a vast system of unblushing robbery! Would to heaven that their *sympathies* were extended to the thousands who are involved in misery and ruin by this audacious system of national perfidy!

If the art or ingenuity of the good citizens of New York has not produced very many objects worthy of admiration, the faces of their lovely fair make ample amends for it. Among the crowds of charmers who throng the fashionable promenade of Broadway, scarcely an ordinary face is to be seen. I, in fact, saw more pretty faces there in one hour than in all my tour in Britain.

I landed in New York without any prejudice against the Americans, and I now take leave of their commercial capital with feelings of esteem and regret. In the society I frequented I neither saw nor heard anything unworthy of, or unbecoming the descendants of Britons. Some little peculiarities, the natural result of circumstances, I certainly noticed; some differences also in their social life; but I shall leave it to those who are disposed to find fault to criticise these matters.

CHAPTER XIII.

PASSAGE FROM NEW YORK TO ALBANY BY STEAMER—THE PASSENGERS—ARRIVAL AT ALBANY—JOURNEY TO MONTREAL.

THE navigation of the Hudson not being yet interrupted by ice, I determined on proceeding to Albany by steamboat, in preference to the railroad, with the view of seeing the far-famed scenery of the country through which the river flows. I accordingly embarked on the 5th of February. We had not proceeded far, however, when we found the face of the country covered with snow; and thus the pleasure I had anticipated from my aquatic trip was in a great measure lost.

Winter had set in in earnest, and the cold became so severe as we ascended, that the deck was abandoned, and the nearest seat to the stove

was considered the best. The passengers being now all crowded below, the group presented a complete epitome of American society: here were members of the legislature proceeding to the capital on parliamentary duty; here also were congregated in the same cabin, merchants, mechanics, and farmers, messing at the same board, and at first mixed up promiscuously together. They did not, however, long continue so; the more respectable part, separating from the crowd, occupied one end of the cabin, the plebeians occupied the other. Thus the homogeneous ingredients of the mass having united, no further mixture took place during the passage.

It is true, one of patrician rank might occasionally be observed stepping beyond the ideal boundary, and sitting down among the plebeians, probably some of his constituents,—would call for a pipe, and, stretching out his legs, commence to puff, spit, and debate, like one of themselves; and having by these means convinced them that he still considered them as his *equals*, would retire again *ad suos*.

The Americans are accused by Europeans of being cold and reserved towards strangers; for my part, I found them sociable and communicative in the extreme. A few hours after I had embarked on board the steamboat I found myself quite at home. I was much pleased to observe the rational manner in which the passengers amused themselves. Little groups were formed, where religion, politics and business matters were discussed with excellent sense and judgment. These seemed to be the common topics of discourse in both ends of the cabin. I frequented both, and saw nothing indecorous or improper in either, save the spitting and the outrageous rush to the table; such a scene as the latter is only to be seen in America.

The servants bawl out at the top of their lungs:—

"Time enough, gentlemen! time enough! No hurry, no hurry!"

Onward they rush, however, crowding, pushing, elbowing, until they take their seats. I was, however, particularly struck with the attention shown

to the ladies, the great sobriety of all classes, and the total absence of impure or profane expressions in conversation. How unlike the scenes one witnesses on board our steamboats in Britain, where the meaner sort of passengers seem to travel on purpose to indulge in drinking!

I arrived at Albany late on the 7th, our progress having been much retarded by the quantity of ice drifting in the river. Finding that the mail was to start for Canada in the course of the night, I decided on going with it, without seeing the capital of New York. Owing to the mildness of the season up to the present time, the roads were in the worst possible condition, and the motion of the carriage passing rapidly over the rugged surface of the muddy roads recently frozen solid, was not only disagreeable, but even painful.

We continued, however, to jolt on night and day, without rest, save during the short time necessary for changing or baiting cattle. The roads became worse, if possible, as we proceeded. A considerable quantity of snow had fallen lately,

which rendered travelling in a wheeled carriage not only disagreeable in the extreme, but also dangerous. We broke down several times, but without serious inconvenience. On one of these occasions we picked ourselves up opposite a farm house, in which we took shelter while the driver was putting matters to rights. It being yet early, the inmates were still in bed; we nevertheless found a rousing fire blazing on the hearth, and seated ourselves around it.

All of a sudden the door of a small apartment flew open, and a large black cat sprang in amongst us.

"Ha! what do you think of that, now?" said one of the passengers, addressing himself to me. "What do you think of the ingenuity of our Yankee cats? Had Boz witnessed that feat, we should have had a page or two more to his notes; and I am sure it would have proved at least as interesting to the reader as the nigger driver's conversation with his cattle."

"That's a fact," said I.

After being jolted and pitched about until every

bone in my body ached again, I reached St. John's on the 12th; and the snow being now sufficiently deep to admit of travelling with sleighs, the remainder of the journey to Montreal was accomplished in comparative comfort.

CHAPTER XIV.

EMBARK FOR THE NORTH — PASSENGERS ARRIVE AT FORT WILLIAM — DESPATCH FROM GOVERNOR — APPOINTED TO MACKENZIE'S RIVER DISTRICT — PORTAGE LA LOCHE — ADVENTURE ON GREAT SLAVE LAKE — ARRIVE AT FORT SIMPSON—PRODUCTIONS OF THE POST.

I SPENT the remainder of the winter enjoying the good things of this life, and on the 28th of April received orders to proceed to Lachine, preparatory to embarking for the north. I embarked on the 29th, but the crews were so intoxicated that we were compelled to land on an island near by, to allow them to recover from the effects of their carousals.

I was joined here by Captain Stalk of the 71st, and Lieutenant Lefroy of the Artillery; the former accompanying us on a jaunt of pleasure, the latter on a scientific expedition. There were

also four junior clerks in the Company's service. Our brigade consisted of three large canoes manned by about fifty Canadians, and Iroquois Indians.

We were detained in our insular encampment by stress of weather until the 2d of May, when we set out. Our crews being now perfectly sober, plied their paddles with the utmost goodwill, singing and whooping, apparently delighted with their situation. Ignorance here was bliss; they little dreamed of the life that awaited them. I may here premise, that as I have already narrated the particulars of a similar voyage, I shall pass on to the different stages of our route without noticing the uninteresting incidents of our daily progress.

We arrived at Fort William on the 28th of May, where we exchanged our large Montreal canoes for smaller. Here Captain S. remained to await his passage back to Canada; not much disposed to try such a jaunt of pleasure again, I suspect,—and Lieutenant L., taking a canoe for himself with a view of prosecuting his scientific

researches more at leisure than our go-a-head mode of travelling admitted, left us also. We were detained a day at Fort William, repairing canoes, arranging crews, &c., and on the 30th, I took leave of my excellent *compagnons de voyage* with sincere regret.

On descending Lac la Pluie River, we landed at an extensive Sauteux camp, where we found a Protestant (Methodist) Missionary, with a native interpreter as his only companion. I learned with much regret, that this gentleman's exertions in his vocation had been attended with little or no success, although he had been two years engaged in it; while the Romish priests, in the same space of time, had converted numbers.

The natives were occupied with the sturgeon fishing, and had apparently been tolerably successful. Having procured a supply for the use of our crews by barter, we set off, and without experiencing any accident, reached Bas de la Rivière on the 13th of June, where I found letters from the Governor, directing me to proceed with all possible speed to York Factory.

Having learned on my way coming up, that one of the gentlemen in McKenzie's River district had resigned, and would quit the country this year,—I felt convinced I should be appointed his successor; that being one of the most wretched parts of the Indian country, it was quite a matter of course that I should be sent thither. Knowing from dear-bought experience, however, that my constitution could no longer bear the hardships and privations to which I had been so long subjected, I wrote the Governor on the subject, and requested that he would grant me an appointment where I might enjoy some degree of comfort—a favour which I humbly conceived my former services entitled me to—otherwise I should retire from the service. We had a fine passage across Lake Winnipeg, and I landed at Norway House with all my party safe and sound, on the 18th of June. I remained there till the 21st, and then set out for York Factory, where I had been about ten days, when an express arrived from Norway House with the Governor's final orders to me, and also his reply to my

last communication, which I here insert at full length.

"Red River Settlement,
"*June* 22, 1843.

"DEAR SIR,

"My eyes are so completely worn out, that I cannot give you a single private line under my own hand. I have perused with attention your private letter of the 14th instant, and should have been glad had it been in my power to have met your wishes in regard to an appointment; but from the few commissioned gentlemen disposable this season, it was quite impossible to consult wishes. You were, therefore, long before receipt of your letter, appointed to McKenzie's River. That is now one of the finest fields we have for extension of trade, and I count much on your activity for promoting our views in that quarter. But while directing your attention to the extension of *your district*, you must likewise use your best endeavours to curtail the indents, as they have of late been on a most alarming scale, comprehending nearly as many articles as appear in our Columbia

requisition; if you look on my notes on the last requisition, you will find that I have been under the necessity of making some further curtailments. I am sorry the idea of retiring has entered your mind, as I was in hopes we could count upon some efficient services out of you while still young and vigorous.

"The Company have of late declined making any purchases of retired interests; it would be therefore quite unnecessary to make any application on that head, as they have lost money by all the recent purchases they have made in that way.

"I am at the Lower Fort, where Mr. Ross came in on me very unexpectedly, just as we were preparing to get on horseback for the upper part of the settlement, so that I am much pressed for time, which will account for the brevity of this communication.

"Pray let me hear from you in Canada by the last canoes, as I shall not then have taken my departure from Montreal.

"I remain, &c. &c.

(Signed) "GEORGE SIMPSON."

Judging, from the instructions contained in the above communication, that I was appointed to the charge of the district, I made up my mind to try how far my health could endure the hardships of which I already had had more than my share; and without a moment's delay, set out for Norway House in a light canoe, where I arrived on the 16th of July. My friend Mr. C—— arrived with his returns from Athabasca a few days afterwards, and his arrangements being completed on the 24th, I embarked as a passenger with him.

We reached the small river Mithai on the 4th of September, when we found the water so low as barely to admit of the passage of the light boats. It happened most fortunately that there were a number of Chippewayan Indians encamped on the spot at the time, else we should have been completely at a nonplus. The crews, good souls! hired those Indians at their own expense, to carry the greater part of the property in their small canoes to the upper part of the river. At the portage we found a number of half-breeds, with their horses, from the Saskatchewan, awaiting

our arrival, in the expectation of being employed to transport the goods. Nor were they disappointed; sooner than undergo the harassing toil of carrying the outfit across a portage of twelve miles, the men hired the half-breeds, parting with their most valuable articles in payment.

Several propositions have been made, of late years, to the Governor, for sparing the men the inhuman labour of this portage, which they must either perform, or sacrifice a considerable part of their paltry wages to avoid it. It was suggested, for instance, that a sufficient number of horses should be stationed at a certain locality, with the requisite conveniences, near the portage, and a couple of men hired on purpose to take care of them, whose wages the winterers should pay out of their own pockets, which they readily assented to; as the transport, by this arrangement, would only cost them one-third of what it cost them to employ the half-breeds. His Excellency, however, was quite "sick" of the Portage La Loche subject; he knew as much about it as anybody,

and felt quite assured that it was the easiest part of the men's duties throughout the voyage! While canoes were used, the duty at Portage la Loche was not nearly so severe as at present; a canoe carried only twenty-five pieces, and was manned by six men; a boat's crew consists only of seven men, while the cargo consists of from sixty to seventy pieces.

The descent of the Clear Water and Athabasca rivers was effected without any accident, and we arrived at Athabasca on the 16th of September; whence I set out again, after a few days' delay, for Fort Resolution, on Great Slave Lake, where I was detained by stress of weather until the 29th.

I left the post late in the evening, and intended to encamp on an island at a convenient distance; but the season being far advanced, I felt anxious to proceed, and inquired of my pilot whether he thought there would be any risk in travelling all night? "Not the least," was the reply; and we rowed on accordingly till morning; when lo! the only objects to be seen

were sea and sky. In vain we strained the organs of vision to discover land; there we were, as if in the midst of the ocean, surrounded on all sides by the unbroken circle of the horizon. I do not know that I ever felt more seriously alarmed than at this moment, thus to find myself exposed on an unknown sea, as it might well be termed, in an open boat, and at such an advanced period of the season, without any means of ascertaining what course to steer for land. It would appear our steersman had been napping at the helm in the course of the night, and thus allowed the boat to deviate from her course without noticing it; hence the awkwardness and even the danger of our present situation.

While considering with myself what was best to be done, a fine breeze sprang up; I ordered the sail to be hoisted immediately, determined on going before it until we made land, no matter where. Fortunately the wind continued steady all day, and we at length reached the land a little after sunset, having run at least forty miles. We put ashore at the first convenient landing we could

find, and encamped for the night. Having consulted a map I had with me, and observing by the sun the direction in which we had crossed the lake, (for we had actually crossed it at its greatest width,) I could make out pretty clearly that we had turned our backs to our true course! We had, however, a good supply of provisions, and a voyageur is never discouraged while he has the provender before him. Having now learned, to my cost, what confidence my pilot was entitled to, I determined on keeping land in view for the future.

We embarked early next morning, and, after a tedious and laborious passage of seven days, arrived at Big Island fishery at the outlet of the Lake on the 8th of October, where I found a boat ready to start with a cargo of fish, in which I embarked; and landing finally at Fort Simpson on the 16th, my long trip of five months *per mare et terram*, was brought to a close; and high time it should, for the weather was become excessively cold, and the ice was forming along the beach.

I was much grieved to find Mr. Lewis confined

to bed in consequence of a shocking accident he had lately met with, his right hand being blown off by the accidental discharge of his fowling-piece.

Having perused the governor's official letter to Mr. Lewis, I found the following paragraph in it relating to myself:—"On retiring from the district next season, you will be pleased to invest Mr. McLean with the management, handing to that gentleman all correspondence, papers, &c., connected with the public business." This paragraph, taken in conjunction with the instructions I had previously received, confirmed both Mr. L. and myself in the opinion that I was to succeed him in the charge; and we took our measures accordingly.

I was very agreeably surprised to find that the high latitude of this locality (61° north) did not prevent agricultural operations from being carried on with success. Although the season had been rather unfavourable, the farm yielded four hundred bushels of potatoes, and upwards of one hundred bushels of barley; the barn-

yard, with its stacks of barley and hay, and the number of horned cattle around it, had quite the air of a farm standing in the "old country." It is to be regretted that the gentlemen here should have paid so little attention to the cultivation of the soil in former times, as the produce would, ere now, not only have contributed to the support of the establishment, but have afforded assistance to the natives in years of scarcity.

For these three years past the distress of the natives in this quarter has been without parallel; several hundreds having perished of want—in some instances, even at the gates of the trading post, whose inmates, far from having it in their power to relieve others, required relief themselves. Here, as in most other parts of the wooded country, rabbits form the principal subsistence of the natives, and when they fail, starvation is the sure and inevitable result; but no former period has been so productive of distress, to so fearful an extent, as the present. With the produce of the farm, Mr. L. was enabled to save the lives of

all those who resorted to his own post; but at Forts Good Hope, Norman, and De Liard, no assistance could be given; as those posts, like most others in the Indian country, depend entirely on the means the country affords in fish, flesh, and fowl, for their subsistence.

CHAPTER XV.

STATEMENTS IN THE EDINBURGH CABINET LIBRARY—ALLEGED KINDNESS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY TO THE INDIANS —AND GENEROSITY—SUPPORT OF MISSIONARIES—SUPPORT WITHDRAWN— PREFERENCE OF ROMAN CATHOLICS — THE NORTH-WEST COMPANY—CONDUCT OF A BRITISH PEER— RIVALRY OF THE COMPANIES—COALITION—CHARGES AGAINST THE NORTH-WEST COMPANY REFUTED.

A VOLUME of the Edinburgh Cabinet Library, in which the Company's territories are described, came lately into my hands. It is there remarked, that "the Company's posts serve as hospitals, to which the Indians resort during sickness, and are supplied with food and medicine; that when winter arrives, the diseased and infirm are frequently left there; that the Company have made the most laudable efforts to instruct and civilize them, employing, at a great expense, Missionaries and Teachers," &c.

I am well aware that the author of this valuable production took it for granted that the information he had obtained, relative to our treatment of the Indians, and other matters, was correct, or he would not have permitted it to go forth to the world under the authority and sanction of his name. But without intending any disrespect to the author, I take leave to state that the above quotations have not the slightest foundation in fact. Our posts serve as hospitals! I have now passed twenty-four years of my life-time in the country; I have served in every quarter of it; and I own that I have never yet known a single instance of an Indian being retained at any inland post for medical treatment. The knowledge the natives possess of the medicinal virtues of roots and herbs, is generally equal to the cure of all their ailments; and we are, in fact, more frequently indebted to them, than they to us, for medical advice. I may mention, however, by way of exception to the general rule, that the dépôts along the coast are well supplied with medicines, and that there are medical men there who admi-

nister them to the natives when they apply for them.

In the interior we are allowed to doctor ourselves as we best can. What with the salubrity of the climate, and our abstemious fare, we are enabled, with the aid of a little Turlington balsam, and a dose of salts, perhaps, to overcome all our ailments. Most of us also use the lancet, and can even "spread a plaster, or give a glister," when necessary; but the Indians seldom trouble us.

As to the instruction the natives receive from us, I am at a loss to know what it is, where imparted, and by whom given. "A tale I could unfold!" But let it pass: certain it is, that neither our example nor our precept has had the effect of improving the morals or principles of the natives;—they are neither more enlightened, nor more civilized, by our endeavours, than if we had never appeared among them. The native interpreters even grow old in our service as ignorant of Christianity as the rudest savages who have never seen the face of a white man.

The Church Missionary Society has had two

Missionaries stationed at Red River settlement for some years past, one of whom is designated the Company's Chaplain, and is allowed 100*l.* per annum; the Roman Catholic bishop, too, receives his 100*l.*, and doubtless understands, without any inspiration, the Company's policy in granting the annuity. The gentleman who conducts the academy has also 100*l.* a-year; thus we have 300*l.*, forming the sum total of the "great expenses" the Company are at. It is quite true there are thirteen schools at Red River; there are also eighteen windmills, and the Company furnishes just as much wind for the mills as funds for the support of the schools or teachers. Other teachers than those above specified I have neither seen nor heard of.

Some years ago five Missionaries were sent out to the Hudson's Bay territory by the Wesleyan Missionary Society. After having laboured for some time in the territory, by a decision of the Council the rank of commissioned gentleman, together with the usual allowances attached to that rank, was conferred on them.

The Missionaries had every reason to be grateful for these acts of kindness, and they both felt and expressed their gratitude. Their object, however, in coming to the country was to serve God, not the Hudson's Bay Company; and they proceeded to discharge their duty in the manner their conscience approved, instructing and enlightening the natives with the zeal and perseverance for which their sect is so eminently distinguished. The good fruits were soon apparent; in some parts of the country successful attempts were made to collect the natives: they were taught to cultivate the soil, to husband their produce, so as to render them less dependent on fortuitous circumstances for a living; they were taught to read and write, and to worship God "in spirit and in truth," and numbers "were daily added to the Church;" when, lo! it was discovered that the time devoted to religious exercises, and other duties arising out of the altered circumstances of the converts, was so much time lost to the furhunt; and from the moment this discovery was made, no further encouragement was given to the

innovators. Their labours were strictly confined to the stations they originally occupied, and every obstacle was thrown in the way of extending their missions. Even after some of them had travelled into the remotest parts, and opened up an amicable intercourse with the natives, they were told that collecting the Indians into villages was a measure not to be thought of, as the habitual indolence of the natives precluded the idea of their being induced to cultivate the soil; that even if they were so inclined, the country presented few localities fit for the purpose, &c.

Notwithstanding the high authority whence these allegations emanated, I think I can show the reader that they are in a great measure without foundation.

Here (in lat. 61° north)* we raise crops of barley and potatoes—the former in abundance every year,—the latter, however, are sometimes cut off by the frosts; but this is no more than happens in Canada, and many parts of the United States. The fact is, that there are many favour-

* On the banks of the McKenzie River.

able situations for agriculture to be found in every district of the Company's territories, except perhaps one or two on the shores of Hudson's Bay. The banks of the Athabasca, Peace, Slave, and McKenzie rivers present many localities fit for farming operations; and in the more southern districts they are, of course, far more frequent.

Had the Protestant ministers been allowed a free scope, and the encouragement they at first received been continued, they would ere now have had Missions established in many districts; and there can hardly be a doubt that they would have succeeded here, as elsewhere, in overcoming the natural sloth of the natives. Their good intentions, however, have been frustrated, and they have now the additional mortification of finding themselves supplanted by Romish priests, who, no later than last year, were allowed a free passage in the Company's craft, even to a district where a Protestant Missionary had been settled for several years previously, and had made considerable progress in converting the natives. Not only was he allowed a passage to the district, but

he was lodged and entertained in the Company's establishment.

The consequences of this strange procedure are obvious: the poor ignorant natives, hearing such conflicting doctrines, are at a loss what to think or what to believe; and, naturally enough, conclude that both are alike impostors, and therefore in many cases decline their instructions. It must be acknowledged, however, that the Romish priest is often more successful than the Protestant missionary, and that for obvious reasons. With the former, the Indian needs only profess a desire to become a Christian, and he is forthwith baptized; whereas with the latter, a probationary course—a trial of the proselyte's sincerity—is deemed indispensable. The peculiar dress, moreover, of the Romish ministers, and their imposing ritual, make a great impression on the senses of a barbarous people.

"*He* indeed," say the Indians, when speaking of the priest, "he indeed looks like a great 'man of medicine;' but these others are just like our traders; we can see no difference."

The fact, too, need not be disguised, that we ourselves find the priests far more accommodating than these meddling parsons. The priests, for instance, allow us to amuse ourselves in any manner we think fit, week-day or Sunday; and far from finding fault, ten to one if they don't join in the sport; the Protestant minister, on the contrary, never allows a violation of the sacred day to pass unnoticed, nor fails to warn the delinquent of the consequences. The priest connives at the Indian's hunting on Sunday—the minister strictly forbids it: the priests are single—the ministers are generally married, and their maintenance of course involves a far heavier expense. Considering these things, no reasonable person can surely find fault with us for preferring those who allow us to put what construction we please on the moral law, and at the same time oppose no obstacles to the advancement of our temporal interests.

And here I cannot but express my regret that our Protestant churches should have so long neglected the cultivation of a field that promised such rich harvests as the interior of America.

The superstitions of the aborigines scattered through the Hudson's Bay Company's territories are so gross, and so inconsistent with unsophisticated common sense; and their prejudices in favour of them have been so much shaken by their intercourse with the gentlemen of the trading posts and the other Europeans, whom they are accustomed to look up to as beings of a superior race, that there could be but little difficulty in removing what *remains* of these prejudices; and thus one of the greatest obstacles to the success of a Missionary in other parts of the heathen world, can scarcely be said to exist among them.

The Church of England, it is true, has done a little, but she might have done more—much more. Had the Missionaries at Red River exerted themselves, from the time of their first arrival in the country, in educating *natives* as Missionaries, and sent them forth to preach the Word, the pure doctrines of Christianity would, ere now, have been widely disseminated through the land. But nothing of this kind has been attempted: nor

could it be attempted—now that I think of it—the laying on of "the hands of a Bishop" being indispensable.

As to the diseased and infirm being frequently left at our posts in winter, all I can say is, that I have never seen any such at any of the posts I wintered at, or at any of the posts I visited; nor is it likely that, when we ourselves depend on the natives for a considerable part of our subsistence, we can do much to support them. We support neither old nor young, diseased nor infirm—that is the truth.

In the work above quoted I find the following paragraph relating to the North-West Company.

"Although the rivalry of the North-West Company had the effect of inspiriting and extending the trade; it was carried by them in many respects beyond the legitimate limits, not scrupling at open violence and bloodshed, in which Europeans and natives were alike sufferers."

The controversy between those rival companies has long since been forgotten; but the subject being again obtruded on the public notice, evi-

dently in the spirit of prejudice, there can be nothing improper, I presume, in representing matters in their true and proper lights. Many of the individuals thus calumniated are still alive and settled in the civilized world, where they are esteemed for qualities diametrically opposite to those ascribed to them by their slanderers.

It is well known that the chief advantages the Hudson's Bay Company now possess, they owe to the adventurous North-West traders; by these traders the whole interior of the savage wilds was first explored; by them the water communications were first discovered and opened up to commercial enterprise; by them the first trading posts were established in the interior; by them the natives were first reconciled to the whites; and by them the trade was first reduced to the regular system which the Hudson's Bay Company still follows. When all this had been done by the North-West Company, and they had begun to reap the reward of their toils, and hardships, and dangers, and expenditure—then did the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, led on by a British

peer, step forward and claim, as British subjects, an equal right to share the trade.

Their *noble* leader appeared first in Montreal in the guise of a traveller, where he was received by the North-Westers with open arms, was kindly and hospitably entertained by them, his minutest inquiries regarding their system of trade were candidly and freely answered; and the information thus obtained in the character of a traveller, a guest, and a friend, he forthwith proceeded to use to effect their ruin. Had, however, the North-West Company continued true to themselves, all his arts and attempts would have failed. Had not dissension arisen in the ranks, it is clear that *they*—not the Hudson's Bay Company—would have granted the capitulation. Unfortunately for themselves, however, the partners in the interior, seeing the contest continue so long, and the expenses swallow up all the profits, despaired of the success that was almost within their grasp, and commencing a correspondence among themselves, finally determined on opening a negotiation with their rivals. Two of their

number were accordingly sent home, invested with full powers to act for the general interest. Those gentlemen arrived just as the Directors of the North-West Company in London were about to conclude a most advantageous treaty—a few days more, and the articles had been ratified by the signatures of both parties. At this conjuncture the Delegates arrived, and instead of first communicating with their own Directors, went straight to the Hudson's Bay House, and presented their credentials. The Hudson's Bay Company saw their advantage, and instead of receiving, now dictated the terms; and thus the name of the North-West Company was merged in that of its rival, and the Canadian people were deprived of all interest in that trade which owed its origin to the courage and enterprise of their forefathers.

Such were the relative circumstances of the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies. From 1674 to 1813 the Hudson's Bay Company slumbered at its posts along the shores of Hudson's Bay, never attempting to penetrate beyond the banks of the Saskatchewan, until the North-

Westers had led and cleared the way; and in this manner began their rivalry. That collisions should follow, marked by violence and outrage, need not be wondered at. But violence and outrage were not confined to one side; both parties exceeded the limits prescribed by law. Yet while stern justice alike condemns both, which is the more guilty party? or which has the greater claims on our sympathy?

As to the North-West Company being guilty of the blood of innocent Indians,—the charge is as false as it is invidious. When the blood of their servants was shed without cause or provocation, as frequently happened when they first encountered the fierce savage, they punished the aggressors as the law of God allows, demanding "blood for blood." But while the author (or rather his informant, whose *ribbon* I can plainly distinguish, although he strikes in the dark) so freely censures the North-West Company for avenging the murder of their people, does he mean to insinuate that nothing of the kind is done under the *humane* and *gentle* rule of the

Hudson's Bay Company? What became of the Hannah Bay murderers? They were conveyed to Moose Factory, bound hand and foot, and there shot down by the orders of the Chief Factor. Did the murders committed by the natives at New Caledonia, Thompson's River, and the Columbia, pass unavenged? No! the penalty was fully paid in blood for blood.

But since the author's informant seems disposed to "rake up the smouldering embers" of days bygone, I shall take the liberty of telling him of a tragedy that was enacted at the ancient date of 1836-7. In that winter, a party of men, led by two clerks, was sent to look for some horses that were grazing at a considerable distance from the post. As they approached the spot they perceived a band of Assineboine Indians, eight in number (if I remember aright), on an adjacent hill, who immediately joined them, and, delivering up their arms, encamped with them for the night. Next morning a *court martial* was held by the two clerks and some of the men, to determine the punishment due to the Indians for

having been found near the company's horses, with the *supposed* intention of carrying them off. What was the decision of this mock court martial? I shudder to relate, that the whole band, after having given up their arms, and partaken of their hospitality, were condemned to death, and the sentence carried into execution on the spot,—all were butchered in cold blood!

With the exception of the massacre of the Indians in McKenzie's River district in 1835, no such deed of blood had been heard of in the country. Yet our author's *impartial* informant, perfectly acquainted as he was with all the circumstances of the case, and ready enough as he is to trumpet to the world the alleged crimes of the North-West Company, takes no notice of it! It may be said that the Company are not answerable for crimes committed by their servants without their knowledge. True; but when they are made fully acquainted with those misdeeds, and allow the perpetrators to escape with impunity, the guilt is transferred to their own head; "invitat culpam qui peccatum præterit." The

proceedings of this court-martial were reported at head-quarters, and the punishment awarded to these murderers was—a reprimand! After this, what protection, or generosity, or justice, can the Indians be said to receive from the Hudson's Bay Company?

The Indians to this day talk of their North-west "fathers" with regret. "Our old traders, our fathers, did not serve us so," is a remark I have frequently heard in every part of the country where the North-West Company had established posts. Had their rule been distinguished by oppression or injustice, the natives would rather have expressed their satisfaction at its suppression; had it been tyrannical or oppressive, it would not have been long tolerated. The natives in those times were numerous and warlike; the trading-posts were isolated and far apart; and in the summer season, when the managers proceeded to the dépôts, with the greater part of their people, were entirely at the mercy of the natives, who would not have failed to take advantage of such opportunities to

avenge their wrongs, had they suffered any. The posts, in fact, were left entirely to their protection, and depended on them for support during the absence of the traders, who, on their return in autumn, found themselves surrounded by hundreds of rejoicing Indians, greeting their "fathers" with every manifestation of delight;—he who had not a gun to fire strained his lungs with shouting.

The native population has decreased at an extraordinary rate since those times. I do not mean to affirm that this decrease arises from the Hudson's Bay Company's treatment of them; but, from whatever cause arising, it is quite certain they have greatly decreased. Neither can it be denied, that the natives are no longer the manly, independent race they formerly were. On the contrary, we now find them gloomy and dispirited, unhappy and discontented.

As to our vaunted "generosity" to the natives, I am at a loss to know in what it consists. When a band of Indians arrive at a trading post, each individual is presented with a few inches of tobacco:

here (at Fort Simpson) in winter we add a fish to each. After their furs are traded, a few flints, awls, and hooks, and a trifle of ammunition is given them, in proportion to their hunts, and then—"Va-t-en." This is about the average amount of "generosity" they receive throughout the country; varied, however, by the differences of disposition observable in the Hudson's Bay Company's traders, as among all other mortals. Some of us would even withhold the awls and hooks, if we could; others, at the risk of being "hauled up" for extravagance, would add another hook to the number.

Were the Company's standing rules and regulations acted upon, we might perhaps have some title to the generosity we boast of. In these rules we are directed to supply *poor* Indians with ammunition and fishing tackle, gratis. This looks very well on paper; but are we allowed the means of bestowing these gratuities? Certainly not.*

* When the Israelites were ordered to provide straw for their bricks, the material *could* be procured in Egypt, although at the expense of great additional toil;—not so the supplies for the Indian trade; in the event of a deficiency, neither money nor labour can procure them.

Our outfits, in many cases, are barely sufficient to meet the exigencies of the trade; they are continually reduced in proportion to the decrease in the returns; and the strictest economy is not only recommended, but enforced. On the due fulfilment of these commands our prospects in the service depend; and few indeed will think of violating them, or of sacrificing their own interests to benefit Indians. I repeat that, far from having it in our power to bestow anything gratuitously, we are happy when allowed sufficient means to barter for the furs the Indians bring us.

The Company also make it appear by their standing rules, that we are directed to instruct the children, to teach the servants, &c.; but where are the means of doing so? A few books, I have been told, were sent out for this purpose, after the coalition; what became of them I know not. I never saw any. The history of commercial rule is well known to the world; the object of that rule, wherever established, or by whomsoever exercised, is gain. In our intercourse with the natives of America no other object is discernible, no other object is thought of, no other object is allowed.

CHAPTER XVII.

ARRIVAL OF MR. LEFROY—VOYAGE TO THE LOWER POSTS OF THE MACKENZIE—AVALANCHE—INCIDENTS OF THE VOYAGE—VOYAGE TO PORTAGE LA LOCHE—ARBITRARY AND UNJUST CONDUCT OF THE GOVERNOR—DESPOTISM—MY REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR.

In the early part of this winter several Indians came in, complaining that they were starving for want of food; and their emaciated forms proved that they did not complain without cause. Our means, however, were too limited to afford them any effectual relief. We were glad to learn afterwards, that although many suffered, none died from actual want; and the rabbits soon afterwards appearing in greater numbers than had been seen for years past, relief was obtained.

Towards the latter end of March, I was gratified by the arrival of Mr. Lefroy. This gentleman seems equal to all the hardships and priva-

tions of a voyageur's life, having performed the journey from Athabasca hither, a distance of at least six hundred miles, on snow-shoes, without appearing to have suffered any inconvenience from it; thus proving himself the ablest *mangeur de lard* we have had in the country for a number of years: there are many of our old winterers who would have been glad to excuse themselves if required to undertake such a journey.

The winter passed without any remarkable occurrence; and on the breaking up of the river, I set off for the lower posts, on the 23d of May, accompanied by Mr. Lefroy, whose zeal for scientific discovery neither cold, nor hunger, nor fatigue, seems to depress. We arrived at Fort Norman on the 27th of May; and after a few hours' delay, embarked, proceeding down stream, night and day.

We reached Fort Good Hope on the 29th, late in the evening; but evening, morning, midnight, and noon-day, are much the same here: I wrote at midnight by the clear light of heaven. The scientific reader need not be informed, that within the arctic circle the sun is but a very short time

beneath the horizon, during the summer solstice. The people of Fort Good Hope see him rising and setting behind the same hill; and in clear weather his rays shed a light above the horizon even after he is set; while during the winter solstice the same hill nearly conceals him from view. Yet the gentleman in charge of this post has passed two years without an inch of candle to light himself to bed; and his predecessor did the same; so that he has no reason to complain.

On our way down we observed a land-slip, or avalanche of earth, that had just tumbled into the river. Mr. Lefroy examined the bank whence it had been detached, and found, by measurement, that the frozen ground was forty-six feet in depth!

Our short sojourn at Fort Good Hope was rendered very unpleasant by the dismal weather; it continued snowing the whole time we remained. The storm abating, we embarked at an early hour, on the 31st of May, and had not proceeded above a few leagues, when a fair breeze sprang up, greatly to the satisfaction of all, but especially of the poor fellows whose toil it relieved. It continued in-

creasing; reef after reef was taken in, till our sheet was finally reduced to a few feet in depth; yet so furious was the gale that we ascended the strongest current with nearly the same velocity we had descended; while the snow fell so thick, and the spray from the river was driven about so violently by the wind, that we could scarce see our way, and only escaped being dashed against the beach by keeping in the centre of the stream. It was also extremely cold; so that our situation in an open boat was not the most enviable.

We arrived at Fort Norman on the 2d of June, about five, A.M., and remained until eleven, A.M., when we embarked, the gale still continuing with unabated violence. Immediately after leaving the Fort the gale carried away our mast; fortunate it was for us that it gave way, else the boat must have capsized. We soon got another mast from the Fort, and sped on our way night and day, if it can be said there is any night here, when the light is so powerful as to throw the stars into the shade. Without experiencing much change in wind or weather, we arrived at Fort Simpson on the 8th of June; having thus performed a voyage of about

1,400 miles (going and coming) in eleven days, including stoppages. I found Mr. Lewis so far recovered from the effects of his wound as to be able to take the same active part in the management of affairs as formerly.

The returns from the different posts being now received, we found them to amount to upwards of 15,000*l.* in value, according to the tariff of last year. Everything being ready for our departure, we left Fort Simpson on the 15th of June, Mr. Lefroy embarking with us. We proceeded to Great Slave Lake without interruption, the weather extremely fine. Within a day's rowing of Fort Resolution we encountered a field of ice that arrested our progress, till a change of wind carried it out to sea.

The moment a passage opened we observed a large canoe making for our encampment. It proved to be Mr. Lefroy's, which he had left with the most of his people at Athabasca. Mr. Lefroy embarked in his own craft, and we proceeded to Fort Resolution in company; and as he had determined on following a different route to Athabasca, we parted here, most probably never to meet again

in this life. Few gentlemen ever visited this country who acquired so general esteem as Mr. Lefroy; his gentlemanly bearing and affable manners endeared him to us all. We arrived at Athabasca on the 5th of July, and at Portage La Loche on the 25th, where we found an increased number of half-breeds waiting our arrival.

The brigade from York Factory arrived with the outfit on the 2d of August, and we exchanged cargoes with the utmost expedition, they receiving the returns of the district, and we the outfit brought by them. By this conveyance I received letters from the Governor, acquainting me "that another gentleman was appointed to the charge of McKenzie's River District, and that he (the Governor) could not conceive on what grounds I fancied myself to be the person so appointed, as he was certain I could not have arrived at such a conclusion from perusing the instructions I had received from him last year!" Until now I thought I understood the English language as well as most people; but the Governor makes it appear plainly enough that I ought still to confine myself to the old Celtic.

The instructions above referred to being given in the foregoing pages, I shall leave the reader to form his own opinion of one who, in the high and honourable position of a Governor, could treat so ungenerously one whom he admitted to be a faithful and meritorious servant, and whom he had acknowledged to be deserving of preferment: and that not on the present only, but on several former occasions.

This last insult I consider the climax to the wrongs I have so long suffered. First I am appointed in the usual terms to the charge of a district. I am allowed to continue in that opinion for a twelvemonth; I enter into correspondence with the gentlemen of the district as their future superintendent, and make my arrangements with them as such; and, *au bout du compte*, am ordered back to the same district to mix with the crowd, and submit to another master. I leave it to the reader to judge whether such a Governor could possibly have the interests of the Company at heart; even supposing for a moment there were no *injustice* in the case; I leave it to him to consider what effect a conduct and measures so

vacillating, unsteady and arbitrary, are likely to have on the service and interests of the Company.

This last act of the Governor made me completely disgusted with a service where such acts could be tolerated. In no colony subject to the British Crown is there to be found an authority so despotic as is at this day exercised in the mercantile Colony of Rupert's Land; an authority combining the despotism of military rule with the strict surveillance and mean parsimony of the avaricious trader. From Labrador to Nootka Sound the unchecked, uncontrolled will of a single individual gives law to the land. As to the nominal Council which is yearly convoked for form's sake, the few individuals who compose it know better than to offer advice where none would be accepted; they know full well that the Governor has already determined on his own measures before one of them appears in his presence. Their assent is all that is expected of them, and that they never hesitate to give. Many years pass without such a thing as a legally constituted

Council being held. A legal Council ought to consist of seven members besides the Governor; three chief factors and four chief traders. The Council, however, seldom consists of more than five members and the Governor.

Some years ago, I happened to be at an establishment where a "Council" was about to be held. On inquiring of his Excellency's Secretary what subject of moment he thought would first engage their attention—

"Engage their attention!" he replied; "bless your heart, man! the minutes of Council were all drawn out before we arrived here; I have them in my pocket."

Clothed with a power so unlimited, it is not to be wondered at that a man who rose from a humble situation should in the end forget what he was and play the tyrant. Let others, if they will, submit to be so ruled with a rod of iron. I at least shall not.

In reply to his favour, I addressed the following letter to his Excellency, a transcript of which I transmitted to the Committee.

"Portage La Loche,
"*August* 3, 1844.

"To Sir George Simpson, Governor of Rupert's Land:—

"Sir—I have the honour to acknowledge your several favours from Lachine and Red River, and am mortified to learn by them you should think me so stupid as not to understand your letters on the subject of my appointment to the charge of the district; your language being so clear, in fact, as to admit of no other construction than the one I put upon it. By referring to the minutes of Council for 1843, I find myself appointed to Fort Good Hope for that year; but you wrote me subsequently to the breaking up of the Council, and used these words: 'That is now the finest field we have for the extension of trade, and I count much on your activity for promoting our views in that quarter. But while directing your attention to the extension of *your district*, you must also use your best endeavours to curtail the indents.'

"Your letter to Mr. C. F. Lewis states, in

nearly these words, that I 'am appointed to succeed him;' and you beg of him 'to deliver into my hands all the documents that refer to the affairs of the district.' Mr. Lewis understood your letters in the same sense as myself, and so did every other person who perused them. What your object may have been in altering this arrangement afterwards, is best known to yourself; and whether such conduct can be reconciled with the principles of honour and integrity which you so strongly recommend in others, and which are so necessary to the well-being of society, is a question which I shall leave for the present to your own decision; while I cannot avoid remarking, that the treatment I have experienced from you on this and on many other occasions, is as unworthy of yourself and as unworthy of the high station you fill, as I am undeserving of it.

"When in 1837, I was congratulated by every member of Council then present at Norway House on the prospect of my immediate promotion, (having all voted for me,) your authority was interposed, and I was, as a matter of course, rejected. You were then candid enough to tell

me that I should not have your interest until the two candidates you then had in view were provided for, and that it would then be my turn. With this assurance from you I cheerfully prepared for my *exile* to *Ungava*. *My turn* only came, however, after *seven* other promotions had been made, and I found myself the last on the list of three gentlemen who were promoted at the same time.

"You are pleased to jest with the hardships I experienced while battling the watch with opposition in the Montreal department, and the privations I afterwards endured in New Caledonia. Surely, Sir, you ought to have considered it sufficient to have made me your dupe, and not add insult to oppression. While in the Montreal department I have your handwriting to show your approval of my 'meritorious conduct,' the course I was pursuing being 'the direct road to preferment;' and your intention, even then, 'to recommend me to the favourable notice of the Governor and Committee;'—promises in which I placed implicit confidence at the time, being as yet a stranger to the ways of the world.—The result of these promises, however, was that the

moment opposition had ceased, I was ordered to resign my situation to another, and march to enjoy the 'delectable scenery' of New Caledonia; from thence you sent me to Ungava, where you say you are not aware I experienced any particular hardship or privation.

"You are aware of the circumstances in which I found myself when I arrived there; that consideration was not allowed to interpose between me and my duty, however; and I accordingly traversed that desolate country in the depth of winter,—a journey that nearly cost myself and my companions our lives. I then continued to explore the country during the entire period of my command, and finally succeeded in discovering a practicable communication with Esquimaux Bay, and in determining the question so long involved in uncertainty as to the riches the interior possessed, and by so doing saved an enormous expense to the concern. The Hon. Committee are aware of my exertions in that quarter, themselves, as I had the honour of being in direct communication with them while there.

"I have the honour, &c.

(Signed) "JOHN McLEAN."

CHAPTER XVII.

SITUATION OF FORT SIMPSON—CLIMATE—THE LIARD—EFFECTS OF THE SPRING FLOODS—TRIBES INHABITING MACKENZIE'S RIVER DISTRICT—PECULIARITIES—DISTRESS THROUGH FAMINE—CANNIBALISM—ANECDOTE—FORT GOOD HOPE SAVED BY THE INTREPIDITY OF M. DECHAMBAULT—DISCOVERIES OF MR. CAMPBELL.

Mr. Lewis embarked for York Factory on the 4th of August. I set out on my return on the 6th, and arrived at Fort Simpson on the 22d. Having prepared and sent off the outfit for the different posts with all possible expedition, I found myself afterwards at leisure to note down whatever I thought worthy of being recorded with reference to this section of the country.

There are seven posts in this district; three on the River Liard and its tributaries; three on the banks of McKenzie's River, and one on Peel's River. About two degrees to the north of Good

Hope, Fort Simpson, the dépôt of the district, is situated at the confluence of the Liard and McKenzie, in lat. 61° north. Heat and cold are here felt in the extremes; the thermometer frequently falls to 50° minus in winter, and rises sometimes to 100° in the shade in summer. The River Liard has its source in the south among the Rocky Mountains: its current is remarkably strong; and in the early part of summer, when swollen by the melting of the snow, it rushes down in a foaming torrent, and pours into the McKenzie, still covered with solid ice, when a scene ensues terrific and grand:—the ice, resisting for some time the force of the flood, ultimately gives way with the noise of thunder, and clashing, roaring and tumbling, it rolls furiously along until it accumulates to such an extent as to dam the river across. This again presents, for a time, a solid barrier to the flood, which is stopped in its course; it then rises sometimes to the height of thirty and forty feet, overflowing the adjacent country for miles, and levelling the largest trees with the ground. The effects of this frightful conflict are visible in all the lower grounds along the river.

The trading posts are situated on the higher grounds, yet they are not secure from danger. Fort Good Hope was swept clean away some years ago, and its inmates only saved themselves by getting into a boat that happened fortunately to be at hand. The McKenzie opens about the end of May, and is ice-bound in November.

The tribes who inhabit the banks of the McKenzie, and the interior parts of the district, are members of the powerful and numerous Chippewayan family, and are known by the names of Slaves, Dogribs, Rabbitskins, and Gens des Montagnes. The Loucheux, or Squint-Eyes, frequent the post on Peel's River, and speak a different language; their hunting-grounds are within the Russian boundary, and are supposed to be rich in fur-bearing animals. The Loucheux have no affinity with the Chippewayan tribes, nor with their neighbours, the Esquimaux, with whom, however, they maintain constant intercourse, though not always of the most friendly kind, violent quarrels frequently occurring between them. The various dialects spoken by the other tribes are intelligible to all; in manners, customs,

and personal appearance, there is also the closest similarity.

In one point, however, these tribes differ, not only from the parent tribe, but from all the other tribes of America;—they treat their women with the utmost kindness, the men performing all the drudgery that usually falls to the women. Here the men are the hewers of wood and drawers of water; they even clear away the snow for the encampment; and, in short, perform every laborious service. This is indeed passing strange;—the Chippewayans, and all other Indians, treat their women with harshness and cruelty; while the women on the banks of the McKenzie—Scottiçé—"wear the breeks!" The Rabbitskins and Slaves are in truth a mild, harmless, and even a timid race; could it be this softness of disposition that induced the weaker sex first to dispute, and finally to assume the supremacy?—or what cause can be assigned for a trait so peculiar in this remotely situated portion of the Indian race?

These tribes clothe themselves with the skins of rabbits, and feed on their flesh; when the

rabbits fail, they are reduced to the greatest distress both for food and raiment. I saw a child that remained naked for several days after its birth, its parents having devoured every inch of their miserable dress that could be spared from their bodies: it was at last swaddled in crow's skins!

These two tribes generally live near the banks of the great rivers, and seem disposed to pass their pilgrimage on earth with as little toil, and as little regard to comfort, as any people in being. They pass summer and winter in the open air; they huddle together in an encampment, without any other shelter from the inclemency of the weather than what is afforded by the spreading branches of some friendly pine, and use no more fire than what is barely sufficient to keep them from freezing. Their wants are few, and easily provided for; when they have killed a few deer to afford them sinews for making rabbit-snares, they may be said to be independent for the remainder of the season. Their work consists in setting those snares, carrying home the game caught in them, eating them when cooked, and

then lying down to sleep. A taste, however, for articles of European manufacture is gaining ground among them, and to obtain those articles a more active life is necessary, so that some tolerable fur-hunters are now to be found among them.

The Dogribs occupy the barren grounds that are around Great Bear Lake, and extend to the Copper-mine River. That part of the country abounds in rein-deer, whose skin and flesh afford food and raiment to the natives. They are a strong, athletic, well-formed race of Indians, and are considered more warlike than their neighbours, who evidently dread them.

None of the Indians who frequent the posts on McKenzie's River have hereditary chiefs; the dignity is conferred by the gentlemen in charge of posts on the best hunters. On these occasions a suit of clothes is bestowed, the most valued article of which is a coat of coarse red cloth, decorated with lace; and, as the reward of extraordinary merit, a felt hat is added, ornamented in the same manner, with a feather stuck in the side of it. Thus equipped, the new-made

chief sallies forth to receive the gratulations of his admiring friends and relatives, among whom the coat is ultimately divided, and probably finishes its course in the shape of a tobacco-pouch. In course of time, the individuals thus distinguished obtain some weight in the councils of their people, but their influence is very limited; the whole of the Chippewayan tribes seem averse to superior rule.

Like the Esquimaux and Carriers, they seem to have had no idea of religion prior to the settlement of Europeans among them; all the terms they at present use in reference to the subject seem of recent origin, and invented by the interpreters. They name the Deity, "Ya ga ta-that-hee-hee,"—"The Man who reclines on the sky;" angels are called "the birds of the Deity,"—"ya gat he-be e Yadzé;" the devil, "Ha is linee," or, "the sorcerer."

The Slaves and Rabbitskins have also their magicians, whom alone they fear and reverence. Polygamy is not common, yet there are instances of one man having two *female masters*. In times of famine the cravings of hunger often drive these

poor Indians to desperation, when the feelings of humanity and of nature seem utterly eradicated.

During the fearful distress of the two past years, a band of Slaves came to Fort Simpson in a condition not to be described. Many of them had perished by the way; but the history of one family is the most shocking I ever heard. The husband first destroyed the wife, and packed her up as provision for the journey. The supply proving insufficient, one of the children was next sacrificed. The cannibal was finally left by the party he accompanied with only one child remaining —a boy of seven or eight years of age. Mr. Lewis immediately despatched two men with some pemmican, to meet him; the aid came too late,—they found the monster roasting a part of his last child at the fire. Horrified at the sight, they uttered not a word, but threw the provisions into the encampment, and retreated as fast as they could. A few days afterwards this brute arrived strong and hearty, and appeared as unconcerned as if all had gone on well with him and his family. Cannibalism is more frequently known among the Slaves and Rabbitskins than any other of the

kindred tribes; and it is said that women are generally the perpetrators of the crime; it is also said, that when once they have tasted of this unhallowed food they prefer it to every other.

All the Chippewayan tribes dispose of their dead by placing them in tombs made of wood, and sufficiently strong to resist the attacks of wild beasts. The body is laid in the tomb at full length, without any particular direction being observed as to the head or feet. Neither they, nor any other Indians I am acquainted with, place their dead in a sitting posture.

It is affirmed by some writers that the Indians have a tradition among them of the migration of their progenitors from east to west. I have had every opportunity of investigating the question, and able interpreters wherever I wintered; but I never could learn that any such tradition existed. Even in their tales and legends there is never any reference to a distant land; when questioned in regard to this, their invariable answer is, "Our fathers and our fathers' fathers have hunted on these lands ever since the flood, and we never heard of any other country till the

whites came among us." These tribes have the same tradition in regard to the flood, that I heard among the Algonquins at the gates of Montreal, some trifling incidents excepted.

Unlike most other Indians, the Slaves have no fixed bounds to their hunting-grounds, but roam at large, and kill whatever game comes in their way, without fear of their neighbours. The hunter who first finds a beaver-lodge claims it as his property, but his claim is not always respected.

Besides the Indians enumerated in the preceding pages, a number of stragglers, but little known to us, occasionally resort to the post. A band of these—nine in number—made their appearance at Fort Norman this summer; and, after trading their furs, set out for Fort Good Hope, with the avowed intention of plundering the establishment, and carrying off all the women they could find. On arriving at the post they rushed in, their naked bodies blackened and painted after the manner of warriors bent on shedding blood; each carrying a gun and dirk in his hands.

The chief, on being presented with the usual gratuity—a piece of tobacco, rudely refused it; and commenced a violent harangue against the whites, charging them with the death of all the Indians who had perished by hunger during the last three years; and finally challenged M. Dechambault, the gentleman in charge of the post, to single combat. M. Dechambault, *dicto citius*, instantly sprung upon him, and twisting his arm into his long hair, laid him at his feet; and pointing his dagger at his throat, dared him to utter another word. So sudden and unexpected was this intrepid act, that the rest of the party looked on in silent astonishment, without power to assist their fallen chief, or revenge his disgrace. M. Dechambault was too generous to strike a prostrate foe, even although a savage, but allowed the crest-fallen chief to get on his legs again; and thus the affair ended.

The Company owe the safety of the establishment to Mr. D.'s intrepidity: had he hesitated to act at the decisive moment, the game was up with him, for he had only two lads with him, on whose aid he could place but little reliance. Mr. D.

has been thirty years in the Company's service, and is still a *clerk*; but he is himself to blame for his want of promotion, having been so inconsiderate as to allow himself to be born in Canada, a crime which admits of no expiation.

This district is at present by far the richest in furs of any in the country; this is owing partly to the indolence of the natives, and partly to the circumstance of the beaver in some localities being, through the barrenness of the surrounding country, inaccessible to the hunter. When the haunts of the animal become overcrowded, they send forth colonies to other quarters.

At the first arrival of the Europeans, large animals, especially moose and wood rein-deer, were abundant everywhere. In those times the resources of the district were adequate to the supply of provisions for every purpose; whereas, of late years, we have been under the necessity of applying for assistance to other districts.

A new field has lately been laid open for the extension of the trade of this district. An enterprising individual—Mr. R. Campbell—having been for several years employed in exploring the in-

terior, last summer succeeded in finding his way to the west side of the Rocky Mountain chain. The defile he followed led him to the banks of a very large river, on which he embarked with his party of hardy pioneers; and following its course for several days through a charming country, rich in game of every description—elk, rein-deer, and beaver, he eventually fell in with Indians, who received them kindly, although they had never seen Europeans before. From them he learned that a party of whites, Russians of course, had ascended the river in the course of the summer, had quarrelled with the natives, and killed several of them; and that the whites had returned forthwith to the coast. These friendly Indians entreated Mr. C. to proceed no farther, representing that he and his party were sure to fall victims to their revenge. This, however, could not shake his resolution; he had set out with the determination of proceeding to the sea at all hazards, and no prospect of danger could turn him from it; till his party refused to proceed farther on any conditions, when he was compelled to return.

The returns of this district have, for years past, averaged 12,000*l.* per annum; the outfit, including supplies for officers and servants, has not exceeded as many hundreds. The affairs of the different posts are managed by seven or eight clerks and postmasters; and there are about forty hired servants—Europeans, Canadians, and half-breeds; Indians are hired for the trip to the portage. The living for some years past has not been such as Gil Blas describes, as "fit to tickle the palate of a bishop;" at Fort Simpson we had, for the most part of the season, fish and potatoes for breakfast, potatoes and fish for dinner, and cakes made of flour and grease for supper. The fish procured in this quarter is of a very inferior quality.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. MACPHERSON ASSUMES THE COMMAND—I AM APPOINTED TO FORT LIARD, BUT EXCHANGE FOR GREAT SLAVE LAKE—THE INDIANS—RESOLVE TO QUIT THE SERVICE—PHENOMENA OF THE LAKE.

On the 2d of October Mr. McPherson arrived from Canada, and I forthwith demitted the charge. I was now appointed to Fort Liard, but the season being far advanced, it had been found necessary to appoint another previously, whose arrangements for the season being completed, it was deemed expedient that I should pass the winter at Great Slave Lake; and I embarked for that station accordingly on the 4th, and arrived on the 16th.

This post formerly belonged to Athabasca, but is now transferred to McKenzie's River district. The natives consist of Chippewayans, properly so

called, and Yellow Knives, a kindred tribe; the former inhabit the wooded parts of the country, extending along the northern and eastern shores of the lake; and the latter, the opposite side extending towards the Arctic regions, where there is no wood to be found; it abounds, however, in rein-deer and musk oxen. The Yellow Knives were at one time a powerful and numerous tribe; but their number has been greatly diminished by a certain disease that lately prevailed among them, and proved peculiarly fatal. They also waged a short but bloody war with the Dogribs, that cost many lives. They muster at present between sixty and eighty men able to bear arms.

The Chippewayans in this quarter are a shrewd sensible people, and evince an eager readiness to imitate the whites. Some years ago a Methodist Missionary visited Athabasca; and although he remained but a short time, his instructions seemed to have made a deep impression. They observe the Sabbath with great strictness, never stirring from their lodges to hunt, nor even to fetch home the game when killed, on that day; and they carefully abstain from all the grosser vices to

which they formerly were addicted. What might not be expected of a people so docile, if they possessed the advantages of regular instruction!

Having fortunately a supply of books with me, and other means of amusement, I found the winter glide away without suffering much from ennui; my health, however, proved very indifferent; and that circumstance alone would have been sufficient to induce me to quit this wretched country, even if my earlier prospects had been realized, as they have not been. From the accompt current, I find my income as chief trader for 1841 amounts to no more than 120*l.*: "Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes;" and since things are come to this pass, it is high time I should endeavour to make honey for myself, in some other sphere of life. I therefore transmitted my resignation to head-quarters.

I cannot close this chapter without mentioning a singular phenomenon which the lake presents in the winter season. The ice is never less than five feet in thickness, frequently from eight to nine; yet the water under this enormous crust not only feels the changes in the atmosphere, but

anticipates them. An approaching change of wind or weather is known twenty-four hours before it occurs. For instance, while the weather is perfectly calm, if a storm be at hand, the lake becomes violently agitated the day before; when calm weather is to succeed, it is indicated in like manner by the previous stillness of the lake, even when the gale is still raging in the air. In summer there is no perceptible current in the lake; in winter, however, a current always sets in the direction of the wind, and indicates a change of wind by running in a different direction. These curious points have been ascertained by the long observation of our fishermen, who, in the beginning of winter, bore holes in the ice for the purpose of setting their lines, and visit them every day, both in order to keep them open, and to take up what fish may be caught.

In consequence of the frequent shifting of the current, they experience no little difficulty in adjusting their lines, the current being occasionally so strong as to raise them to an angle of forty degrees. Thus, if the lines were too long, and the current not very strong, they would

drag on the bottom; if too short, and the current strong, they would be driven up upon the ice. The approach of a storm is indicated, not by any heaving of the ice, but by the strength of the current, and the roaring of the waves under the ice, which is distinctly heard at a considerable distance, and is occasionally increased by the collision of detached masses of broken ice, which, in the earlier part of the season, have been driven under the main crust.

CHAPTER XIX.

REFLECTIONS—PROSPECTS IN THE SERVICE—DECREASE OF THE GAME—COMPANY'S POLICY IN CONSEQUENCE—APPEAL OF THE INDIANS—MEANS OF PRESERVING THEM, AND IMPROVING THEIR CONDITION—ABOLITION OF THE CHARTER—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

THE history of my career may serve as a warning to those who may be disposed to enter the Hudson's Bay Company's service. They may learn that, from the moment they embark in the Company's canoes at Lachine, or in their ships at Gravesend, they bid adieu to all that civilized man most values on earth. They bid adieu to their family and friends, probably for ever; for if they should remain long enough to attain the promotion that allows them the privilege of revisiting their native land — a period of from twenty to twenty-five years—what changes does

not this life exhibit in a much shorter time? They bid adieu to all the comforts and conveniences of civilized life, to vegetate at some desolate, solitary post, hundreds of miles, perhaps, from any other human habitation, save the wigwam of the savage; without any other society than that of their own thoughts, or of the two or three humble individuals who share their exile. They bid adieu to all the refinement and cultivation of civilized life, not unfrequently becoming semi-barbarians,—so altered in habits and sentiments, that they not only become attached to savage life, but eventually lose all relish for any other.

I can give good authority for this. The Governor, writing me last year regarding some of my acquaintances who had recently retired, observes—"They are comfortably settled, but apparently at a loss what to do with themselves; and sigh for the Indian country, the squaws, and skins, and savages."

Such are the rewards the Indian trader may expect;—add to these, in a few cases, the acquisition of some thousands, which, after forty years'

exile, he has neither health, nor strength, nor taste to enjoy. Few instances have occurred of gentlemen retiring with a competency under thirty-five or forty years' servitude, even in the best days of the trade; what period may be required to attain that object in these times, is a question not easily solved. Up to 1840, one eighty-fifth share had averaged 400*l.* per annum; since then, however, the dividends have been on the decline, nor are they ever likely to reach the same amount, for several reasons,—the chief of which is the destruction of the fur-bearing animals.

In certain parts of the country, it is the Company's policy to destroy them along the whole frontier; and our general instructions recommend that every effort be made to lay waste the country, so as to offer no inducement to petty traders to encroach on the Company's limits. Those instructions have indeed had the effect of ruining the country, but not of protecting the Company's domains. Along the Canadian frontier, the Indians, finding no more game on their own lands, push beyond the boundary, and not only

hunt on the Company's territory, but carry a supply of goods with them, which they trade with the natives. Their Honours' fiat has also nearly swept away the fur animals on the west side of the Rocky Mountains; yet I doubt whether all this precaution will ensure the integrity of their domains. The Americans have taken possession of the Columbia, and will speedily multiply and increase: ere many years their trappers will be found scouring the interior, from the banks of the Columbia to New Caledonia, and probably penetrating to the east side of the Rocky Mountains. Should they do so, that valuable part of the country embraced by the Peace and McKenzie Rivers would soon be ruined; for the white trapper makes a clean sweep wherever he goes. Taking all these circumstances into consideration, I do not see any great probability—to say the least—that the trade will ever attain the prosperity of days bygone.

Even in such parts of the country as the Company endeavour to preserve, both the fur-bearing and larger animals have of late become so scarce, that some tribes are under the necessity of quit-

ting their usual hunting-grounds. A certain gentleman, in charge of a district to which some of those Indians withdrew, on being censured for harbouring them in his vicinity, writes thus:— "Pray, is it surprising, that poor Indians, whose lives are in jeopardy, should relish a taste of buffalo meat? It is not the Chippewayans alone that leave their lands to go in search of food to preserve their lives; the Strongwood Crees and Assineboines are all out in the plains, because, as they affirm, their usual hunting-grounds are so exhausted that they cannot live upon them. It is no wish of mine that those Indians should visit us—we have trouble enough with our own,—but to turn a poor Indian out of doors, who arrives at the Company's establishment nearly dead with hunger, is what I am not able to do."

In the work already quoted I find it stated "that the Company have carefully nursed the various animals, removing their stations from the various districts where they had become scarce, and taking particular care to preserve the female while pregnant! instead, therefore, of being in a state of diminution, as generally supposed, the

produce is increasing throughout their domains." Fudge! It is unnecessary to say, that if this statement were correct, we should not hear such distressing accounts of starvation throughout the country. No people can be more attached to their native soil than the Indians; and it is only the most pressing necessity that ever compels them to remove.

In 1842 the Governor and Committee issued positive orders that the beavers should be preserved, and every effort made to prevent the Indians from killing them for a period of three years. This was, in a great measure, "shutting the stable door after the steed was stolen." The beavers had already been exterminated in many parts of the country; and even where some were yet to be found, our injunctions to the natives to preserve them had but little weight. To appease their hunger they killed whatever game came in their way, and as we were not permitted to buy the beaver skins, they either converted them into articles of clothing for themselves or threw them away. Now (1845) the restriction is removed, and the beavers have sensibly increased; but

mark the result: the natives are not only encouraged but strenuously urged to hunt, in order that the parties interested may indemnify themselves for their lost time; and ere three years more shall have elapsed, the beaver will be found scarcer than ever.

It is thus evident that whatever steps their Honours may take to preserve the game, the attainment of that object, in the present exhausted state of the country, is no longer practicable.

As to the Company's having ever issued orders, or recommended any particular measures for the preservation of the larger animals, male or female, the statement is positively untrue. The minutes of the Council are considered the statutes of the land, and in them the provision districts are directed to furnish so many bags of pemmican, so many bales of dry meat, and so many cwt. of grease, every year; and no reference whatever is made to restrictions of any kind in killing the animals. The fact is, the provisions must be forthcoming whatever be the consequence; our business cannot be carried on without them.

That the natives wantonly destroy the game in

years of deep snow is true enough; but the snow fell to as great a depth before the advent of the whites as after, and the Indians were as prone to slaughter the animals then as now; yet game of every description abounded and want was unknown. To what cause then are we to ascribe the present scarcity? There can be but one answer—to the destruction of the animals which the prosecution of the fur-trade involves.

As the country becomes impoverished, the Company reduce their outfits so as to ensure the same amount of profit,—an object utterly beyond their reach, although economy is pushed to the extreme of parsimony; and thus, while the game becomes scarcer, and the poor natives require more ammunition to procure their living, their means of obtaining it, instead of being increased, are lessened. As an instance of the effects of this policy, I shall mention what recently occurred in the Athabasca district.

Up to 1842 the transport of the outfit required four boats, when it was reduced to three. The reduction in the article of ammunition was felt so severely by the Chippewayans, that the poor crea-

tures, in absolute despair, planned a conspiracy to carry off the gentleman at the head of affairs, and retain him until the Company should restore the usual outfit.

Despair alone could have suggested such an idea to the Chippewayans, for they have ever been the friends of the white man. Mr. Campbell, however, who had passed his life among them, conducted himself with so much firmness and judgment, that, although the natives had assembled in his hall with the intention of carrying their design into execution, the affair passed over without any violence being attempted.

The general outfit for the whole northern department amounted in 1835, to 31,000*l.*; now (1845) it is reduced to 15,000*l.*, of which one-third at least is absorbed by the stores at Red River settlement, and a considerable portion of the remainder by the officers and servants of the Company throughout the country. I do not believe that more than one half of the outfit goes to the Indians.

While the resources of the country are thus becoming yearly more and more exhausted, the

question naturally suggests itself, What is to become of the natives when their lands can no longer furnish the means of subsistence? This is indeed a serious question, and well worthy of the earnest attention of the philanthropist. While Britain makes such strenuous exertions in favour of the sable bondsmen of Africa, and lavishes her millions to free them from the yoke, can nothing be done for the once noble, but now degraded, aborigines of America? Are they to be left to the tender mercies of the trader until famine and disease sweep them from the earth? People of Britain! the Red Men of America thus appeal to you;—from the depths of their forest they send forth their cry—

"Brethren! beyond the Great Salt Lake, we, the Red Men of America salute you:—

"Brethren!

"We hear that you are a great and a generous people; that you are as valiant as generous; and that you freely shed your blood and scatter your gold in defence of the weak and

oppressed; if it be so, you will open your ears to our plaints.

" Brethren! Our ancients still remember when the Red Men were numerous and happy; they remember the time when our lands abounded with game; when the young men went forth to the chase with glad hearts and vigorous limbs, and never returned empty; in those days our camps resounded with mirth and merriment; our youth danced and enjoyed themselves; they anointed their bodies with fat; the sun never set on a foodless wigwam, and want was unknown.

" Brethren! When your kinsmen came first to us with guns, and ammunition, and other good things the work of your hands, we were glad and received them joyfully; our lands were then rich, and yielded with little toil both furs and provisions to exchange for the good things they brought us.

" Brethren! Your kinsmen are still amongst us; they still bring us goods, and now we cannot want them; without guns and ammunition we must die. Brethren! our fathers were urged by the white men to hunt; our fathers listened to

them; they ranged wood and plain to gratify their wishes; and now our lands are ruined, our children perish with hunger.

"Brethren! We hear that you have another Great Chief who rules over you, to whom even our great trading Chief must bow; we hear that this great and good Chief desires the welfare of all his children; we hear that to him the white man and the red are alike, and, wonderful to be told! that he asks neither furs nor game in return for his bounty. Brethren! we feel that we can no longer exist as once we did; we implore your Great Chief to shield us in our present distress; we desire to be placed under his immediate care, and to be delivered from the rule of the trading Chief who only wants our furs, and cares nothing for our welfare.

"Brethren! Some of your kinsmen visited us lately; they asked neither our furs nor our flesh; their sojourn was short; but we could see they were good men; they advised us for our good, and we listened to them. Brethren! We humbly beseech your Great Chief that he would send some of those good men to live amongst us:

we desire to be taught to worship the Great Spirit in the way most pleasing to him: without teachers among us we cannot learn. We wish to be taught to till the ground, to sow and plant, and to perform whatever the good white people counsel us to do to preserve the lives of our children.

"Brethren! We could say much more, but we have said enough,—we wish not to weary you.

"Brethren! We are all the children of the Great Spirit; the red man and the white man were formed by him. And although we are still in darkness and misery, we know that all good flows from him. May he turn your hearts to pity the distress of your Red Brethren! Thus have we spoken to you."

Such are the groans of the Indians. Would to Heaven they were heard by my countrymen as I have heard them! Would to Heaven that the misery I have witnessed were seen by them! The poor Indians then would not appeal to them in vain. I can scarcely hope that the voice of a humble, unknown individual, can reach the ears, or make any impression on the minds of those who have the supreme rule in Britain; but if there are

there men of rank, and fortune, and influence, whose hearts sympathise with the misery and distress of their fellow-men, whatever be their country or hue—and, thank God! there are not a few—it is to those true Britons that I would appeal in behalf of the much-wronged Indians; the true and rightful owners of the American soil.

If I am asked what I would suggest as the most effective means for saving the Indians, I answer: Let the Company's charter be abolished, and the portals of the territory be thrown wide open to every individual of capital and enterprise, under certain restrictions; let the British Government take into its hands the executive power of the territory, and appoint a governor, judges, and magistrates; let Missionaries be sent forth among the Indians;—already the whole of the Chippewayan tribes, from English River to New Caledonia, are disposed to adopt our religion as well as our customs, so that the Missionaries' work is half done. Let those of them who manifest a disposition to steady industry be encouraged to cultivate the ground: let such as evince any aptitude for mechanics be taught some handicraft, and congre-

gated in villages, wherever favourable situations can be found—and there is no want of them. Let schools be established and supported by Government—not mere *common* schools, where reading, writing, arithmetic, and perhaps some of the higher branches may be taught; but *training* and *industrial* schools. Where the soil or climate is unfit for husbandry, other means of improving their condition might be resorted to. In the barren grounds, bordering on the Arctic regions, rein-deer still abound. Why should not the Indians succeed in domesticating these animals, and rendering them subservient to their wants, as the Laplanders do? I have been informed that the Yellow Knives, and some of the other tribes inhabiting these desert tracts, have the art of taming the fawns, which they take in great numbers while swimming after their dams, so that they follow them like dogs till they see fit to kill them.

Such, in brief, are the measures which, after much experience, and long and serious consideration, I would venture to propose in behalf of the Indians; and most happy shall I be if anything I have said shall have the effect of awakening the

public interest to their condition; or form the groundwork of any plan which, by the blessing of God, may have the effect of preserving and christianizing the remnants of these unhappy tribes.

It may be objected, that the Company have had their charter renewed for a period of twenty-one years, which does not expire till 1863; and that Government is bound in honour to sustain the validity of the deed. But if Government is bound to protect the *interests* of the Hudson's Bay Company, is it less bound to protect the *property* and *lives* of their weak, ignorant, and wronged subjects? The validity of the original charter, the foundation of the present, is, however, more than questioned; nay, it has been declared by high authority to be null and void. Admitting its validity, and admitting that the dictates of honour call for the fulfilment of the charter in guarding the *profits* of the few individuals (and their dependants) who assemble weekly in the old house in Fenchurch Street; are we to turn a deaf ear to the still small voice of justice and humanity pleading in behalf of the numerous tribes of perishing Indians? Now, now is the time to apply

the remedy; in 1863, where will the Indian be?

If it is urged that the measures I propose violate the charter, deprive the Company of their sovereignty, and reduce them to the situation of subjects; still, I say, they will have vast advantages over every other competitor. Their ample resources, their long exclusive possession of the trade, their experience, the skill and activity of their agents, will long, perhaps permanently, secure to them the greatest portion of the trade; while the Indians will be greatly benefited by a free competition.

If it be urged that the profits will be so much reduced by competition, that the trade will not be worth pursuing; I answer, that competition has certainly a natural tendency to reduce profits; but experience proves that it has also a tendency to reduce costs. A monopolist company never goes very economically to work; and, although much economy, or rather parsimony, of a very questionable and impolitic kind, has been of late years attempted to be introduced into the management of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs, a free and

fair competition will suggest economy of a sounder kind—the facilitating of transport, the improvement of portages, and the saving of labour. Where are the evils which interested alarmists predicted would follow the modification of the East India Company's charter?

I have spoken of restrictions to be imposed on those who engage in the trade. These are;—that no one be allowed to engage in it without a licence from Government;—that these licensed traders should be confined to a certain locality, beyond which they should not move, on any pretext;—and that no spirituous liquors should be sold or given to the Indians under the severest penalties—such as the forfeiture of the offender's licence, and of their right to participate in the trade in all time coming.

CHAPTER XX.

WESLEYAN MISSION—MR. EVANS—ENCOURAGEMENT GIVEN BY THE COMPANY—MR. EVANS'S EXERTIONS AMONG THE INDIANS —CAUSES OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE COMPANY'S SUPPORT — CALUMNIOUS CHARGES AGAINST MR. EVANS — MR. E. GOES TO ENGLAND—HIS SUDDEN DEATH.

ALLUSION has been made in a former chapter to the Company's encouragement of Missionaries; I shall now add a few facts by way of illustration.

The Rev. Mr. Evans, a man no less remarkable for genuine piety than for energy and decision of character, had been present at several of the annual meetings of the Indians at Manitoulin Island, and had felt his sympathy deeply awakened by the sight of their degradation and spiritual destitution. While thus affected, he received an invitation from the American Episcopal Methodists to go as a Missionary among the Indians resident

in the Union. Feeling, however, that his services were rather due to his fellow-subjects, he resolved to devote his labours and his life to the tribes residing in the Hudson's Bay territory. Having made known his intentions to this Canada Conference, he, together with Messrs. Thomas Hurlburt, and Peter Jacobs, was by them appointed a Missionary, and at their charges sent to that territory. No application was made to the Company, and neither encouragement nor support was expected from them. Mr. E. and his brother Missionaries began their operations by raising with their own hands, unassisted, a house at the Pic; themselves cutting and hauling the timber on the ice. They obtained, indeed, a temporary lodging at Fort Michipicoton, but they not only found their own provisions, but the comforts of the establishment were materially increased by Mr. E.'s and his interpreter's success in fishing and hunting. Late in the fall, accompanied by two Indian boys in a small canoe, Mr. E. made a voyage to Sault Ste Marie for provisions: and on this expedition, rendered doubly hazardous by the lateness of the season, and the inexperience

of his companions, he more than once narrowly escaped being lost.

Returning next season to Canada for his family, he met Sir G. Simpson, on Lake Superior. Having learned that the Mission was already established, and likely to succeed, Sir George received him with the utmost urbanity, treating him not only with kindness but with distinction; he expressed the highest satisfaction at the establishment of the Mission, promised him his utmost support, and at length proposed that arrangement, which, however apparently auspicious for the infant Mission, was ultimately found to be very prejudicial to it.

The caution of Mr. E. was completely lulled asleep by the apparent kindness of the Governor, and the hearty warmth with which he seemed to enter into his views. Sir George proposed that the Missionaries should hold the same rank and receive the same allowance as the wintering partners, or commissioned officers; and that canoes, or other means of conveyance, should be furnished to the Missionaries for their expeditions; nor did it seem unreasonable to stipulate

that in return for these substantial benefits, they should say or do nothing prejudicial to the Company's interests either among the natives, or in their Reports to the Conference in England, to whose jurisdiction the Mission was transferred. The great evil of this arrangement was, that the Missionaries, from being the servants of God, accountable to Him alone, became the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, dependent on, and amenable to them; and the Committee were of course to be the sole judges of what was, or was not, prejudicial to their interests. Still, it is impossible to blame very severely either Mr. E. or the Conference for accepting offers apparently so advantageous, or even for consenting to certain restrictions in publishing their Reports:—with the assistance and co-operation of the Company great good might be effected;—with the hostility of a Corporation all but omnipotent within its own domain, and among the Indians, the post might not be tenable.

For some time matters went on smoothly: by the indefatigable exertions of Mr. E. and his fellow-workers, aided also by Mrs. E., who devoted much

of her time and labour to the instruction of the females, a great reformation was effected in the habits and morals of the Indians. But Mr. Evans soon perceived that without books printed in the Indian language, little permanent good would be realized: he therefore wrote to the London Conference to send him a printing press and types, with characters of a simple phonetic kind, which he himself had invented, and of which he gave them a copy. The press was procured without delay, but was detained in London by the Governor and Committee; and though they were again and again petitioned to forward it, they flatly refused. Mr. E., however, was not a man to be turned aside from his purpose. With his characteristic energy he set to work, and having invented an alphabet of a more simple kind, he with his penknife cut the types, and formed the letters from musket bullets; he constructed a rude sort of press; and aided by Mrs. E. as compositor, he at length succeeded in printing prayers, and hymns, and passages of Scripture for the use of the Indians. Finding their object in detaining the press thus baffled, the Governor and

Committee deemed it expedient to forward it; but with the express stipulation, that every thing printed should be sent to the commander of the post as *censor*, before it was published among the Indians. This was among the first causes of distrust and dissatisfaction.

Another source of dissatisfaction was Mr. E.'s faithfulness in regard to the observance of the sabbath. As the Indians became more enlightened they ceased to hunt and fish, and even to carry home game on the sabbath day; and, as a matter of course, they would no longer work for the Company on that day. But Mr. E. was guilty of equal faithfulness in remonstrating with those gentlemen in the service with whom he was on terms of intimacy in regard to this point of the Divine law; and several gentlemen, convinced by his arguments, determined to cease from working and travelling on the sabbath.

One of them, Mr. C—l, while on a distant expedition, acted in accordance with his convictions, and rested on the sabbath. The voyage turned out unusually stormy, and the water in the rivers was low, so that it occupied several days longer

than it had formerly done; and the loss of time, which was really owing to the adverse weather, was charged on his keeping of the sabbath. From that day forth, the encouragement given to the Missionaries began to be withdrawn; obstacles were thrown in their way, and although nothing was openly done to injure the Missions already in operation, it would seem that it was determined that, if the Company could prevent it, no new stations should be occupied—at least by *Protestant* Missionaries.

Not long after, Mr. E., finding that the Missions he had hitherto superintended were in such a state of progress that he might safely leave them to the care of his fellow-labourers, resolved to proceed to Athabasca and establish a mission there. Having gone, as usual, to the Commander of the post to obtain the necessary provisions, and a canoe and boatmen, he was received with unusual coldness. He asked provisions,—none could be given; he offered to purchase them, —the commander refused to sell him any. He begged a canoe,—it was denied him; and finally, when he intreated that, if he should be able to

procure those necessaries elsewhere, he might at least be allowed a couple of men to assist him on the voyage, he was answered that none would be allowed to go on that service. Deeply grieved, but nothing daunted, Mr. E. procured those necessaries from private resources, and proceeded on his voyage. But a sad calamity put a stop to it; in handing his gun to the interpreter it accidentally went off, and the charge lodging in his breast killed him instantaneously. He was thus compelled to return, in a state of mind bordering on distraction.

Mr. E.'s zeal and piety promised the best results to the spiritual and eternal interests of his Indian brethren. His talents, energy, and fertility of resource, which seemed to rise with every obstacle, had the happiest effects on their temporal well-being; and his mild and winning manners greatly endeared him to all the Indians. But his useful and honourable career was drawing to a close. The mournful accident already alluded to had affected his health, and he now received his death-blow.

Yet, obnoxious as he had become to the Com-

pany, and formidable to their interests as they might deem one of his talents and indomitable resolution to be, the blow was not struck by them. It was dealt by a *false* brother; by one who had eaten of his bread: by a "familiar friend, with whom he had taken sweet counsel." Charges affecting his character, both as a man and a minister, of the foulest and blackest kind, were transmitted to the Conference by a brother Missionary. To answer these charges, as false as they were foul, he was compelled to leave the churches he had planted and watered, to bid adieu to the people whose salvation had been for years the sole object of his life, and to undertake a voyage of 5,000 miles to appear before his brethren as a *criminal.* As a criminal, indeed, he was received; yet after an investigation, begun and carried on in no very friendly spirit to him, truth prevailed. He was declared innocent, and the right hand of fellowship was again extended to him. He made a short tour through England, and was everywhere received with respect, and affection, and sympathy.

But anxiety, and grief, and shame had done

their work. Scarce three weeks had elapsed, when, having spent the evening along with Mrs. E. in the family of a friend, whose guest he was, with some of his wonted cheerfulness, Mrs. E. having retired but a few minutes, she was summoned to the room where she had left him in time to see him pass into that land where "the wicked cease from troubling." The cause of his death was an *affection of the heart.* And that man—the slanderer—the murderer of this martyred Missionary—what punishment was inflicted on him? He is to this day unpunished! and yet lives in the Hudson's Bay territory, the disgrace and opprobrium of his profession and his church.

Such are a few facts connected with the establishment of the Wesleyan Mission in the Hudson's Bay territory, and illustrative of the sort of encouragement given by the Committee to Protestant Missionaries. By way of rider to these, I may just remind the reader that Roman Catholic Missionaries have since been freely permitted to plant churches wherever they pleased, even in districts where Protestant Missions were already established.

After all, this is not much to be wondered at, since Sir G. Simpson openly avowed to Mr. Evans his preference of Roman Catholic Missionaries; one reason for this preference being, that these never interfered with the Company's servants, nor troubled them with any precise or puritanical notions about the moral law.

CHAPTER XXI.

SKETCH OF RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

RED RIVER — SOILS — CLIMATE—PRODUCTIONS—SETTLEMENT OF RED RIVER, THROUGH LORD SELKIRK, BY HIGHLANDERS —COLLISION BETWEEN THE NORTH-WEST AND HUDSON'S BAY COMPANIES—INUNDATION —ITS EFFECTS — FRENCH HALF-BREEDS — BUFFALO-HUNTING — ENGLISH HALF-BREEDS—INDIANS — CHURCHES—SCHOOLS—STORES—MARKET FOR PRODUCE—COMMUNICATION BY LAKES.

RED RIVER rises in swamps and small lakes in the distant plains of the south; and after receiving a number of tributary streams that serve to fertilize and beautify as fine a tract of land as the world possesses, discharges itself into the eastern extremity of Lake Winnipeg in lat. 50°. The climate is much the same as in the midland districts of Canada; the river is generally frozen across about the beginning of November, and open about the beginning of April. The soil

along the banks of the river is of the richest vegetable mould, and of so great a depth that crops of wheat are produced for several years without the application of manure. The banks produce oak, elm, maple, and ash; the woods extend rather more than a mile inland. The farms of the first settlers are now nearly clear of wood; an open plain succeeds of from four to six miles in breadth, affording excellent pasture. Woods and plains alternate afterwards until you reach the boundless prairie. The woods produce a variety of delicious fruits, delighting the eye and gratifying the taste of the inhabitants; cherries, plums, gooseberries, currants, grapes, and sasgatum berries in great abundance. Coal has been discovered in several places, and also salt springs.

Lord Selkirk having been made acquainted with the natural advantages of this favoured country by his North-West hosts in Montreal, determined forthwith on adopting such measures as might ensure to himself and heirs the possession of it for ever. Accordingly, on his return to England, he purchased Hudson's Bay Company's

stock to an amount that enabled him to control the decisions of the Committee; and thus, covered by the shield of the charter, he could carry on his premeditated schemes of aggression against the North-West Company, with some appearance of justice on his side.

With the view of carrying out these schemes, he proceeded to the North of Scotland, and prevailed on a body of Highlanders to emigrate to Red River. To induce them to quit their native land, the most flattering prospects were held out to them; the moment they set their foot in this land of promise, the hardships and privations to which they had hitherto been subject, would disappear; the poor man would exchange his "potato patch" for a fine estate; the gentleman would become a ruler and a judge in—Assineboine! Who could doubt the fulfilment of the promises of a British peer? His Lordship, therefore, soon collected the required number of emigrants—for the Highlander of the present day gladly embraces any opportunity of quitting a country that no longer affords him bread.

At the period in question, Red River district

furnished the principal part of the provisions required by the North-West Company, and was a wilderness, inhabited only by wandering Indians, and abounding in the larger animals—elk, and rein-deer in the woods, and buffalo in the plains.

As Red River flows into Lake Winnipeg, which discharges itself by Neilson's river into Hudson's Bay, and could therefore be included within the territory granted by the charter, our noble trader concluded that, by taking formal possession of the country, he would obtain the right of expelling other adventurers, merely by warning them off the Company's grounds; and that, if the warning were disregarded, he could claim the aid of Government to enforce his rights, and thus ruin the North-West Company at a blow. His Lordship's Governor was therefore instructed to issue a proclamation, prohibiting the North-West Company by name, and all others, from carrying on any species of trade within Red River district, and ordering such establishments as had been formed to be abandoned.

The North-Westers read the proclamation, and —prosecuted their business as before. In such

circumstances quarrels were unavoidable, but they were generally settled with *ink*; a collision ultimately took place that led to the shedding of blood. The North-Westers had collected a large supply of provisions at their dépôt, and were about to forward it to the place of embarkation, when they were informed—falsely, as it afterwards appeared,—that the Governor intended to waylay and seize the provisions. A report, equally false, was brought to the Governor, that the North-Westers had assembled a strong force of half-breeds to attack the fort. These lying rumours led to an unhappy catastrophe.

The Governor sent out scouts to watch the North-West party; and ascertaining that they were on their march with an unusual force,—which they had brought in order to repel the attack which they supposed was to be made upon them,—he seized his arms, and marched with his whole party to meet them. The North-Westers seeing them approach, halted, and standing to their arms, sent forward one of their number to demand whether Mr. Semple and his party were for peace or war.

During the interview a shot was fired—it is a matter in dispute to this day who fired it—the half-breeds immediately poured a volley into the ranks of their opponents, and brought down nearly all the gentlemen of the party, including the unfortunate Governor; the remainder fled to the fort, so closely pursued, that friend and foe entered together. Thus the poor settlers found themselves suddenly surrounded by all the horrors of war; their anticipated paradise converted into a field of blood; husbands and brothers killed; their little property pillaged, and their persons in the power of their enemies.

An arrangement, however, was entered into by the rival Companies, that allowed the emigrants to take possession of the lands allotted to them, and in the course of a few years their labour had made a sensible impression on the forest. Cattle were sent out from England; pigs and poultry followed, and honest Donald was beginning to find himself at his ease, when, lo! all his dreams of future wealth and happiness vanished in a moment. Red River overflowed its banks, and inundated the whole settlement. This extraordi-

nary flood caused immense loss; it overthrew houses, swept away the cattle, and utterly ruined the crops of the season. The buffaloes, however, proved abundant, and afforded a supply of provisions enough to prevent starvation, and the settlers soon recovered from the effects of this misfortune. Another calamity followed—the caterpillar appeared—at first in small numbers, afterwards in myriads, covering the whole land, and eating up "every green thing," and thus the crops were destroyed a second time; but the consequences were not so severely felt as formerly; the preceding season had proved extremely abundant, and a sufficient quantity remained to supply the failure of this year. Since that time the colony has advanced rapidly, enjoying undisturbed peace; industry has its sure reward in the abundance of all the necessaries of life which it procures.

Since the coalition took place, Red River has become the favourite retreat of the Company's servants, especially of those who have families; here they obtain lands almost at a nominal price. A lot of one mile in length and six chains in

breadth, costs only 1*l.*; and they find themselves surrounded by people of congenial habits with themselves, the companions of their youth, and fellow-adventurers; those with whom they tugged at the oar, and shared the toil of the winter march; and when they meet together to smoke the social pipe, and talk of the scenes of earlier days, "nor prince nor prelate" can enjoy more happiness.

The last census, taken in 1836, gave the population at 5,000 souls; it may now (1845) amount to 7,000. Of this number a very small proportion is Scotch, about forty families, and perhaps 300 souls. The Scotch carried with them the frugal and industrious habits of their country; the same qualities characterise their children, who are far in advance of their neighbours in all that constitutes the comforts of life. These advantages they owe, under the blessing of Providence, to their own good management; yet, notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding that they are a quiet and a moral people, they are objects of envy and hatred to their hybrid neighbours; and thus my industrious and worthy countrymen, in the possession of almost every

other blessing which they could desire, are still unhappy from the malice and ill-will they meet with on every side; and being so inferior in numbers, they must submit to the insults and abuse they are daily exposed to, while the blood boils in their veins to resent them. Thus situated, many of them have abandoned the settlement and gone to the United States, where they enjoy the fruits of their industry in peace.

The French half-breeds and retired Canadian voyageurs occupy the upper part of the settlement. The half-breeds are strongly attached to the roving life of the hunter; the greater part of them depend entirely on the chase for a living, and even the few who attend to farming take a trip to the plains, to feast on buffalo humps and marrow fat. They sow their little patches of ground early in spring, and then set out for the chase, taking wives and children along with them, and leaving only the aged and infirm at home to attend to the crops.

When they set out for the plains, they observe all the order and regularity of a military march; officers being chosen for the enforcement of dis-

cipline, who are subject to the orders of a chief, whom they style "M. le Commandant." They take their departure from the settlement about the latter end of June, to the number of from 1,200 to 1,500 souls; each hunter possesses at least six carts, and some twelve; the whole number may amount to 5,000 carts. Besides his riding nag and cart horses, he has also at least one buffalo runner, which he never mounts until he is about to charge the buffalo. The "runner" is tended with all the care which the cavalier of old bestowed on his war steed; his housing and trappings are garnished with beads and porcupine quills, exhibiting all the skill which the hunter's wife or belle can exercise; while head and tail display all the colours of the rainbow in the variety of ribbon attached to them.

The "Commandant" directs the movements of the whole cavalcade: at a signal given in the morning by sound of trumpet—*alias*, by blowing a horn,—the hunters start together for their horses; while the women and servants strike the tents, and pack up and load the baggage. The horses being all collected, a second blast forms the order

of march; the carts fall in four abreast; the hunters mount; and dividing into their different bodies, one precedes the baggage, another closes the line, and a third divides in both flanks. The third blast is the signal for marching. They halt about two hours at noon, for the purpose of allowing their cattle time to feed; and the same order is observed as in starting in the morning. When they encamp at night, the carts are placed in a circle; and the tents are pitched within the enclosed space, so as to form regular streets; the horses are "hobbled" and turned loose to graze.

All the arrangements for the night being completed, guards are appointed to watch over the safety of the camp, who are relieved at fixed hours. In this manner they proceed until they approach the buffalo grounds, when scouts are sent out to ascertain the spot where the herd may be found. The joyful discovery being made, the scouts apprise the main body by galloping backwards and forwards, when a halt is immediately ordered. The camp is pitched; the hunters mount their runners; and the whole being formed into an extended line, with the utmost regularity,

they set forward at a hand gallop; not a soul advances an inch in front of the line, until within gun-shot of the herd, when they rein up for a moment. The whole body then, as if with one voice, shout the war whoop, and rush on the herd at full gallop; each hunter, singling out an animal, pursues it until he finds an opportunity of taking sure aim; the animal being dispatched, some article is dropped upon it that can be afterwards recognised. The hunter immediately sets off in chase of another, priming, loading, and taking aim at full speed. A first-rate runner not unfrequently secures ten buffaloes at a "course;" from four to eight is the usual number. He who draws the first blood claims the animal, and each individual hunter is allowed whatever he kills.

The moment the firing commences, the women set out with the carts, and cut up and convey the meat to the camp; where it is dried by means of bones and fat. Two or three days are required for the operation, when they set out again; and the same herd, perhaps, yields a sufficient quantity to load all the carts, each carrying about one thousand pounds,—an enormous quantity in the

aggregate; yet the herd is sometimes so numerous that all this slaughter does not seem to diminish it.

The buffalo hunt affords much of the excitement, and some of the dangers, of the battle-field. The horses are often gored by the infuriated bulls, to the great peril—sometimes to the loss—of the rider's life; serious accidents too happen from falls. There are no better horsemen in the world than the Red River "brulés;" and so long as the horse keeps on his legs, the rider sticks to him. The falls are chiefly occasioned by the deep holes the badger digs all over the prairies; if the horse plunges into one of these, both horse and man roll on the ground. Fatal accidents, also, occasionally happen from gun shots in the *melée;* and it is said, I know not with what truth, that a wronged husband, or a supplanted lover, sometimes avails himself of the opportunity presented by the *melée* to miss the buffalo, and hit a friend—by *accident.*

A priest generally accompanies the camp, and mass is celebrated with becoming solemnity on Sundays. The "brulés" attend, looking very serious and grave until a herd of buffaloes appear; when the cry of "La vache! la vache!" scatters the

congregation in an instant; away they scamper, old and young, leaving the priest to preach to the winds, or perhaps to a few women and children. Two trips in the year are generally made to the prairie; the latter in August. The buffalo hunter's life assimilates more to that of the savage than of the civilized man; it is a life of alternate plenty and want—a life also of danger and inquietude. The Indians of the plain view the encroachment of the strange race on their hunting grounds, with feelings of jealousy and enmity. They are, accordingly, continually on the alert; they attack detached parties and stragglers; they also set fire to the prairies about the time the "brulés" set out for the hunt, and by this means drive the game beyond their reach. Owing to this circumstance, the "brulés" have returned with empty carts for these two years past; and their only resource has been to betake themselves to the woods, and live after the manner of the Indians. Could they find a sure market for the produce of the soil, so as to remunerate their labour, there can be little doubt but that they might be gradually detached from the half-savage

life they lead, and become as steady and industrious as their neighbours.

The English half-breeds, as the mixed progeny of the British are designated, possess many of the characteristics of their fathers; they generally prefer the more certain pursuit of husbandry to the chase, and follow close on the heels of the Scotch in the path of industry and moral rectitude. Very few of them resort to the plains, unless for the purpose of trafficking the produce of their farms for the produce of the chase; and it is said that they frequently return home better supplied with meat than the hunters themselves.

The Indians who have been converted to the Protestant religion, are settled around their respected pastor at the lower extremity of the settlement, within twenty miles of the mouth of the river. The Sauteux, of all other tribes, are the most tenacious of their own superstitions; and it would require all the zeal and patience and perseverance of the primitive teachers of Christianity to wean them from them. But when convinced of his errors, the Sauteux convert is the more steadfast in his faith; and his

steadfastness and sincerity prove an ample reward to his spiritual father for his pains and anxiety on his behalf.

The Indian converts are entirely guided by heir Missionary in temporal as well as in spiritual things. When he first came among them, he found their habits of indolence so deep-rooted, that something more than advice was necessary to produce the desired change. Like Oberlin, therefore, he set before them the example of a laborious and industrious life; he tilled, he sowed, he planted, he reaped with his own hands, and afterwards shared his produce with them. By persevering in this, he succeeded in finally gaining them to his views; and, at the present moment, their settlement is in as forward a state of improvement as any of the neighbouring settlements.

They have their mills, and barns, and dwelling-houses; their horses, and cattle, and well-cultivated fields:—a happy change! A few years ago, these same Indians were a wretched, vagabond race; "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the other settlers, as their pagan brethren

still are; they wandered about from house to house, half-starved, and half-naked; and even in this state of abject misery, preferring a glass of "fire-water" to food and raiment for themselves or their children.

There are at present three ministers of the episcopal communion at Red River. The Scotch inhabitants attend the church regularly, although they sigh after the form of worship to which they had been accustomed in early youth; they, however, assemble afterwards in their own houses to read the Scriptures, and worship God after the manner of their fathers. There are also three Roman Catholic clergymen, including a bishop; —good, exemplary men, whose "constant care" is not "to increase their store," but to guide and direct their flocks in the paths of piety and virtue. But, alas! they have a stiff-necked people to deal with;—the French half-breed, who follows the hunter's life, possesses all the worst vices of his European and Indian progenitors, and is indifferent alike to the laws of God and man. There are, in all, seven places of worship, three Roman

Catholic, and four Protestant, including two for the Indians.

The education of the more respectable families, particularly those of the Company's officers, is well provided for at an institution of great merit; the gentleman who presides over it being every way qualified for the important trust. The different branches of mathematical and classical learning are taught in it; and the school has already produced some excellent scholars. In addition to the more useful branches of female education, the young ladies are taught music and drawing by a respectable person of their own sex. Thus we have, in the midst of this remote wilderness of the North-West, all the elements of civilized life; and there are there many young persons of both sexes, well educated and accomplished, who have never seen the civilized world. There are also thirteen schools for the children of the lower class, supported entirely by the parents themselves.

The Company have here two shops (or stores), well supplied with every description of goods the

inhabitants can require; there are besides several merchants scattered through the settlement, some of whom are said to be in easy circumstances. The Company's bills constitute the circulating medium, and are issued for the value of from one to twenty shillings. Of late years, a considerable amount of American specie has found its way into the settlement, probably in exchange for furs clandestinely disposed of by the merchants beyond the line. The petty merchants import their goods from England by the Company's ships; an *ad valorem* duty is imposed on these goods, the proceeds of which are applied to the payment of the constabulary force of the colony. The Company's charter invests it with the entire jurisdiction, executive and judicial, of the colony. The local Governor and Council enact such simple statutes as the primitive condition of the settlement requires; and those enactments have hitherto proved equal to the maintenance of good order. A court of quarter sessions is regularly held for the administration of justice, and the Company have lately appointed a Recorder to preside over it. It is gratifying to learn, that this functionary has had

occasion to pass judgment on no very flagitious crime since his appointment.

In the work to which I have so frequently referred, it is mentioned, that a "certain market is secured to the inhabitants by the demand for provisions for the other settlements." If by "settlements" the miserable trading posts be meant, as it must be, I know not on what grounds such an affirmation is made. A sure market, forsooth! A single Scotch farmer could be found in the colony, able alone to supply the greater part of the produce the Company require; there is one, in fact, who offered to do it. If a sure market were secured to the colonists of Red River, they would speedily become the wealthiest yeomanry in the world. Their barns and granaries are always full to overflowing; so abundant are the crops, that many of the farmers could subsist for a period of two or even three years, without putting a grain of seed in the ground. The Company purchase from six to eight bushels of wheat from each farmer, at the rate of three shillings per bushel; and the sum total of their yearly purchases from the whole settlement amounts to—

600 cwt. flour, first and second quality.
35 bushels rough barley.
10 half-firkins butter, 28 lbs. each.
10 bushels Indian corn.
200 cwt. best kiln-dried flour.
60 firkins butter, 56 lbs. each.
240 lbs. cheese.
60 hams.

Thus it happens that the Red River farmer finds a "sure market" for six or eight bushels of wheat—and no more. Where he finds a sure market for the remainder of his produce, Heaven only knows—I do not. This much, however, I do know,—that the incomparable advantages this delightful country possesses are not only in a great measure lost to the inhabitants, but also to the world, so long as it remains under the domination of its fur-trading rulers. In the possession of, and subject to the immediate jurisdiction of the Crown, Assineboine would become a great and a flourishing colony—the centre of civilization and Christianity to the surrounding tribes, who would be converted from hostile barbarians into a civilized and loyal people;—and thus Great Britain would extend and establish her dominion

in a portion of her empire that may be said to have been hitherto unknown to her, while she would open a new field for the enterprise and industry of her sons.

In describing the advantages of this country, candour requires that I should also point out its disadvantages. The chief disadvantage is the difficulty of the communication with the sea, interrupted as it is by shoals, rapids, and falls, which in their present state can only be surmounted with incredible toil and labour. Yet there cannot be a doubt that the skill of the engineer could effect such improvements as would obviate the most, if not the whole, of this labour, and that at no very great cost. The distance from the mouth of Red River to York Factory is about 550 miles; 300 miles of this distance is formed of lakes—(Lake Winnipeg, 250 miles in length, is navigable for vessels of forty and fifty tons burden). The greater part of the river communication might be rendered passable by Durham boats, merely by damming up the rivers. Along the line of communication, many situations may be found suitable for farming operations.

CHAPTER XXII.

SIR G. SIMPSON—HIS ADMINISTRATION.

Sir George Simpson commenced his career as a clerk in a respectable counting-house in London, where his talents soon advanced him to the first seat at the desk. He was in this situation when first introduced to the notice of a member of the Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, who were at that time engaged in the ruinous competition with the North-West Company already referred to. While the contest was at its height, the Company sent out Mr. Simpson as Governor of the Northern department;—an appointment for which, by his abilities natural and acquired, he was well qualified. Mr. Simpson combined with the prepossessing manners of a gentleman all the craft and subtlety of an intriguing courtier; while his cold and callous heart

was incapable of sympathising with the woes and pains of his fellow-men. On his first arrival, he carefully concealed from those whom he was about to supersede, the powers with which he was invested; he studied the characters of individuals, scrutinized in secret their mode of managing affairs, and when he had made himself fully acquainted with every particular he desired to know, he produced his commission;—a circumstance that proved as unexpected as it was unsatisfactory to those whose interests it affected.

Making every allowance for Sir George's abilities, he is evidently one of those men whom the blind goddess "delighteth to honour." Soon after assuming the supreme command, the North-West wintering partners undertook the mission to England, already mentioned, which led to the coalition; and thus Sir George found himself, by a concurrence of circumstances quite independent of his merits, placed at the head of both parties; from being Governor of Rupert's Land his jurisdiction now included the whole of the Indian territory from Hudson's Bay to the shores of the Pacific Ocean; and the Southern department, at

that time a separate command, was soon after added to his government. Here, then, was a field worthy of his talents; and that he did every manner of justice to it, no one can deny. Yet he owes much of his success to the valuable assistance rendered him by Mr. McTavish; at his suggestion, the whole business was re-organized, a thousand abuses in the management of affairs were reformed, and a strict system of economy was introduced where formerly boundless extravagance prevailed. To effect these salutary measures, however, much tact was required: and here Sir George's abilities shone conspicuous. The long-continued strife between the two companies had engendered feelings of envy and animosity, which could not subside in a day; and the steps that had been taken to bring about the coalition, created much ill-will even among the North-West partners themselves. Nor were the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company without their dissensions also. To harmonize these elements of discord, to reconcile the different parties thus brought so suddenly and unexpectedly together into one fold, was a task of the utmost difficulty to accomplish;

but Sir George was equal to it. He soon discovered that the North-West partners possessed both the will and the ability to thwart and defeat such of his plans as were not satisfactory to themselves; that they were by far the most numerous in the Council—at that time an independent body—and the best acquainted with the trade of the Northern department, the most important in the territory; and finding, after some experience, that while those gentlemen continued united, their power was beyond his control, and that to resist them openly would only bring ruin on himself, without any benefit to the concern, he prudently gave way to their influence; and instead of forcing himself against the stream, allowed himself apparently to be carried along with it.

For a time, he seemed to promote all the views of his late adversaries; he yielded a ready and gracious acquiescence in their wishes; he lavished his bows, and smiles, and honied words on them all; and played his part so well, that the North-Westers thought they had actually gained him over to their own side; while the gentlemen of the

Hudson's Bay Company branded him as a traitor, who had abandoned his own party and gone over to the enemy.

The Committee received several hints of the Governor's "strange management," but they only smiled at the insinuations, as they perfectly understood the policy. His well-digested schemes had, in due time, all the success he anticipated.

Having thus completely gained the confidence of the North-West partners, his policy began gradually to unfold itself. One obstreperous North-Wester was sent to the Columbia; another to the Montreal department, where "their able services could not be dispensed with;" and thus in the course of a few years he got rid of all those refractory spirits who dared to tell him their minds.

The North-West nonconformists being in this manner disposed of, Sir George deemed it no longer necessary to wear the mask. His old friends of the Hudson's Bay, or "sky-blue" party, were gradually received into favour; his power daily gained the ascendant, and at this moment Sir George Simpson's rule is more absolute than

that of any governor under the British crown, as his influence with the Committee enables him to carry into effect any measure he may recommend. That one possessed of an authority so unbounded should often abuse his power is not to be wondered at; and that the abuse of power thus tolerated should degenerate into tyranny is but the natural consequence of human weakness and depravity. The question is—Is it consistent with prudence to allow an *individual* to assume and retain such power? Most of the Company's officers enter the service while yet very young; none are so young, however, as not to be aware of the privileges to which they are entitled as British subjects, and that they have a right to enjoy those privileges while they tread on British soil. The oft repeated acts of tyranny of which the autocrat of "all Prince Rupert's Land and its dependencies" has lately been guilty, have accordingly created a feeling of discontent which, if it could be freely expressed, would be heard from the shores of the Pacific to Labrador.

Unfortunately, the Company's servants are so situated, that they dare not express their senti-

ments freely. The clerk knows that if he is heard to utter a word of disapprobation, it is carried to the ears of his sovereign lord, and his prospects of advancement are marred for ever; he therefore submits to his grievances in silence. The chief trader has probably a large family to support, has been thirty or forty years in the service, and is daily looking forward to the other step: he too is silent. The chief factor has a situation of importance in which his vanity is gratified and his comfort secured; to express his opinion freely might risk the sacrifice of some of these advantages; so he also swallows the pill without daring to complain of its bitterness, and is silent.

A very valuable piece of plate was, some years ago, presented to Sir George by the commissioned gentlemen in the service, as a mark of respect and esteem; and this circumstance may be adduced by Sir George's friends, with every appearance of reason, as a proof of his popularity; but the matter is easily explained. Some two or three persons who share Sir George's favour, determine among themselves to present him with some token of their gratitude. They address a circular

on the subject to all the Company's officers, well knowing that none dare refuse in the face of the whole country to subscribe their name. The same cogent reasons that suppress the utterance of discontent compelled the Company's servants to subscribe to this testimonial; and the subscription list accordingly exhibits, with few exceptions, the names of every commissioned gentleman in the service; while two-thirds of them would much rather have withheld their signatures.

Sir George owes his ribbon to the successful issue of the Arctic expedition conducted by Messrs. Dease and Simpson. His share of the merit consisted in drawing out instructions for those gentlemen, which occupied about half-an-hour of his time at the desk. It is quite certain that the expedition owed none of its success to those instructions. The chief of the party, Mr. Dease, was at least as well qualified to give as to receive instructions; and Sir George is well aware of the fact. He knows, too, that Mr. Dease was engaged in the Arctic expedition under Sir J. Franklin, where he acquired that experience which brought this important yet hazardous

undertaking to a successful issue; he knows also that in an enterprise of this kind a thousand contingencies may arise, which must be left entirely to the judgment of those engaged in it to provide against.

Sir George, nevertheless, obtained the chief honours; but the bauble perishes with him; while the courage, the energy and the perseverance of Mr. Dease and his colleague will ever be a subject of admiration to those who peruse the narrative of their adventures.

Sir George's administration, it is granted, has been a successful one; yet his own friends will admit that much of this success must be ascribed to his good fortune rather than to his talents. The North-West Company had previously reduced the business to a perfect system, which he had only to follow. It is true he introduced great economy into every department; but the North-West Company had done so before him, and the wasteful extravagance which preceded his appointment was entirely the result of the rivalry between the two companies, and under any governor

whatever would have ceased when the coalition was effected.

Not a little, too, of Sir George's economy was of "the penny-wise and pound-foolish" kind. Thus it has been already observed, that the lives of the Company's servants, and the property of an entire district, were placed in extreme jeopardy by his false economy; and a contingency, which no prudent man would have calculated upon, alone prevented a catastrophe which involved the destruction of the Company's property to a large amount, as well as of the lives of its servants. But independently of this, he has committed several errors of a most serious kind. Of these the chief is the Ungava adventure, an enterprise which was begun in opposition to the opinion of every gentleman in the country whose experience enabled him to form a correct judgment in the matter; and this undertaking was persisted in, year after year, at an enormous loss to the Company. Finally, he has not even the merit of correcting his own blunders. It was not till after a mass of evidence of the strongest kind was laid

before the Committee, that they, in his absence, gave orders for the abandonment of the hopeless project.

His caprice, his favouritism, his disregard of merit in granting promotion, it will be allowed, could not have a favourable effect on the Company's interests. His want of feeling has been mentioned: a single example of this will close these remarks. A gentleman of high rank in the service, whose wife was dangerously ill, received orders to proceed on a journey of nearly 5,000 miles. Aware that his duty required a prompt obedience to these orders, he set off, taking her along with him. On arriving at the end of the first stage, she became worse; and medical assistance being procured, the physicians were of opinion that in all probability death would be the consequence if he continued his journey. A certificate to this effect was forwarded to Sir George. The answer was, that Madame's health must not interfere with the Company's service; and that he must continue his journey, or abide the consequences.

In consequence of this delay, he only reached

Montreal on the day when the boats were to leave Lachine for the interior. He hurried to the office, where he met Sir George, and was received by him with the cool remark—

"You are late, Sir; but if you use expedition you may yet be in time for the boats."

He earnestly begged for some delay, but in vain. No regard was paid to his entreaties; and he was obliged to hurry his wife off to Lachine, and put her on board a common canoe, where there is no accommodation for a sick person, and where no assistance could be procured, even in the last extremity.

VOCABULARY OF THE PRINCIPAL INDIAN DIALECTS IN USE AMONG THE TRIBES IN THE HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORY.

English.	Sauteu, or Ogibois.	Cree.	Beaver Indian.	Chippewayan.
One	Pejik	Pay ak	It la day	Ittla hē.
Two	Neesh	Neesho	Onk shay day	Nank hay.
Three	Nisway	Nisto	Ta day	Ta he.
Four	Neowin	Neo	Dini day	Dunk he.
Five	Nā nan	Nay nā nan	Tlat zoon e de ay	Sa soot la he.
Six	Ni got as way	Nigotwassik	Int zud ha	L'goot ha hé.
Seven	Nish was way	Tay pa goop	Ta e wayt zdy	Tluz ud dunk he.
Eight	Shwas way	Ea naneo	Etzud een tay	L'goot dung he.
Nine	Sang	Kay gat me tā tat	Kala gay ne ad ay	Itla ud ha.
Ten	Quaitch	Me ta tat	Kay nay day	Hona.
Eleven	Aji pay jik	Payak ai wak	Tlad ay may day	Itla, ja idel.
Twelve	Aji neesh	Neesh way ai wok.	Ong shay day may day.	Nank hay, ja idel.
Twenty	Neej ta na	Neesh tan ao	Ong ka gay nay day.	Ta he, ja idel.
Thirty	Nisway mittana	Neo meatanao	Tao gay nay day.	
Forty	Neo mittana	&c.	Deo gay nay day.	
Fifty	Nanan mittana	&c.		
Sixty	Nigot asway mittana			
Seventy	Nish was way mittana			
Eighty	Shwas way mittana			

English.	Sauteu, or Ogibois.	Cree.	Beaver Indian.	Chippewayan.
Ninety	Sang mittana			
One hundred	Ni goot wack	Me ta tin mittanao	Kay nay tay	Itla honan nanana.
How often	Anin. tas ink	Tan mat ta to	Tan ay tien	Itla hon eeltay.
How many	Anin ain tas ink	Tan ay ta tik	Tan ay tien	Itla elday.
How long since	Anapé apin aijo	Ta ispi aspin	A shay doo yay	Itla hon il tao.
When	Anapé	Ta is pi	Dee ad doo yay	Itlao.
To-day	Nongum. kajigack	Anootch kee je gak	Doo jay nee ay	Deerd sin o gay.
To-morrow	Wabunk	Wa bakay	Ghad ay zay	Campay.
Yesterday	Chenängo	Ta goosh ick	Ghagh ganno	Hozud singay.
This year	Nongum egee wang	Anootch egee kee wang	Doo la	Do uz sin o gay.
This month	Wà á. Keësis	Awa pee shum	Teeay tee za	Dirius a gay.
A man	Ininé	Nā bay o	Taz eu.	Dinnay you.
A woman	Ikway	Isk way o	Iay quay	Tzay quay.
A girl	Ikway says	Isk way shish	Id az oo	Ed dinna gay.
A boy	Quee we says	Na bay shish	Taz yuz é	Dinnay yoo azay.
Interpreter	Oten way ta ma gay	On tway ta ma gay o.	Nao day ay	Dinnay tee ghaltay.
Trader	Ata way ini niu	Ataway ininiu	Mecoo tay	Ma kad ray.
Moose-Deer	Moze	Mozwa	Tlay tchin tay	Tunnehee hee.
Rein-Deer	Attick	Attick	May tzee	Ed hun.
Beaver	Amick	Amisk	Tza	Tza.
Dog	Ani moosh	Attim	Tlee	Tlee.
Rabbit	Waboose	Waboose	Kagh	Kagh.
Bear	Maqua	Masqua	Zus	Zus.

Wolf	Ma ing an	Mahigan	Tshee o nay . . . Noo nee yay.
Fox	Wa goosh	Ma kay shish . . .	E yay thay . . . . Nag hee dthay.
I hunt	Ni ge oz ay	Ni mā tchin . . .	Na o zed . . . . Naz uz ay.
Thou huntest. .	Ki ge oz ay	Ki ma tchin . . .	Nodzed . . . . Nan ul zay.
He hunts . . .	Ge oz ay	Ma tchio	Nazin zed . . . . Nal zay.
We hunt . . .	Ni ge oz ay min . .	Ni ma tchinan . .	Naze zedeo . . . . Na il zay.
Ye hunt . . .	Ki ge oz aim . . .	Ki ma tchinawao . .	Nazin zedeo . . . Nal zin al day.
They hunt. . .	Ge oz ay wok . . .	Matchiwog	Owadié tzed . . . Na hal zay.
I kill	Ni ne ta gay . . .	Ni mi na hon . . .	Uz. éay gha. . . . Zil tir.
Thou killest . .	Ki ne ta gay . . .	Ki mi na hon . . .	Uz éay ghan . . . Zil hil tir.
He kills . . .	Ne ta gay	Minaho	Ud zeay gha . . . Tla in il tir.
We kill. . . .	Ni ne ta gay min . .	Ni mina honan . .	Uz ugho-ghay uzin . Tla in il dir.
Ye kill	Ki ne ta gaim . . .	Kim in a honawa . .	Uz ugho ghay uzin . Zee ool dir.
They kill . . .	Ne ta gay wok . . .	Minahowog	Utza ghay agho . . Tla in il tay.
I laugh . . .	Ni baap	Ni baap in	Utzay rad lotsh . . Naz-lo.
Thou laughest .	Ki baap	Ki baap in	Utlint lotsh. . . . Na-id-lọ.
He laughs. . .	Baapé	Baapio	Utroz lotsh . . . . Nad-lo.
We laugh . . .	Ni baap imin . . .	Ni baap in an . . .	Utlo wod lotshay . . Tlo a-ec-el-tee.
Ye laugh . . .	Ki baapim	Ki baapin a wao . .	Tlodzud udzee . . . Tlo gha ee-ol-tee.
They laugh . .	Baap ewog	Baapiwog	Tlodzud udzee . . . Tlo-gha-ee-el-tee.
I trade . . .	Ni da ta way . . .	Ni da dā wan . . .	Mata oz lay . . . . Naz nee.
Thou tradest . .	Ki da ta way . . .	Ki da dā wan . . .	Mata an eelay . . . Na el nee.
He trades . . .	Ataway	Atawayo	Kita od eenla . . . Na el nee.
We trade . . .	Ni da ta way min. .	Nin da tā wān an . .	Mata ad oz id la . . Na-da-ell nee.
Ye trade . . .	Ki da ta way min. .	Ki da tā wan-o wa .	Mata a la ozayo . . Na ool nee.
They trade . .	A ta way wok . . .	Ata way wok . . .	Ma tā a leeay la . . Eghon a el nee.
I fight . . .	Ni me gaz	Ni no ti ni gan . .	Magad ay a . . . Dini gun as tir.

English.	Sauteu, or Ogibois.	Cree.	Beaver Indian.	Chippewayan.
Thou fightest	Ki me gaz	Ki no ti ni gan	Magad osee ya la	Dinī gun a ee dthir.
He fights	Mi gazo	No ti ni gay o	—	—
We fight	Ni me gazomin	Nino ti ni gān an	—	—
Ye fight	Ki me gazom	Ki no ti ni gan a wao	—	—
They fight	Mi guz o wog	Notini gay wok	—	—
I set a net	Ni bug-é ta wa	Ni bug-e ta wan	Zoo meet la uz loo	Tloo e kanistan.
Thou settest a net	Ki bug-e ta wa	Ki bug-e ta wan	Too meet lan itlo	Tloo é kan e than.
He sets a net	Bug-e ta wa	Bug-e ta wao	Ta cet loon	Tloo e kan ethan loay.
We set a net	Ni bug-e ta wa min	Ni bug-e ta wānan	Ta ghoo loo hoon	Tloo e kan oodthan.
Ye set a net	Ki bug-é ta wam	Ki bug-e ta-wan a wao	Tà ghoo loo uz éo	Tloo e kan eethan.
They set a net	Bug-e ta wā wog	Bug-e-ta-wa wog	Too milt at la oozoon.	—
I sail	Ni be mash	Ni be mashin	—	—
Thou sailest	Ki be mash	Ki be mashin	—	—
He sails	Bi mash é	Be mash co	—	—
We sail	Ni bi mishimin	Ni bi mashinan	—	—
Ye sail	Ki bi mash im	Ki bi mashin a wao	—	—
They sail	Bi mash i wog	Be mash i wog	—	—
I sleep	Ni ni bā	Ni ni ban	Zus tee ay	Thee id ghee.
Thou sleepest	Ki ni ba	Ki ni ban	Zin tee ay	Theend ghee.
He sleeps	Ni ba	Ni ba o	Na gho tee azay	Thad ghee.

We sleep	Ni ni bā min	Ni ni bān an	Zut ié tsho	Theed ghāz.
Ye sleep	Ki ni bam	Ki ni ban ā wao	Tsuz ié tsho.	Thood ghaz.
They sleep	Ni ba wog	Ni ba wog	Tsugh ien tiez	Hay ud ghaz.
I drink	Ni minik way	Ni minik wan	Uzto	Haysta.
Thou drinkest	Ki minik way	Ki minik wan	Nadho	Nad-ha.
He drinks	Minik way	Minik way o	Ughichedo	Ee ed ha.
We drink	Ni minik way min	Ni minik wānan	May ee ta	Heel tell.
Ye drink	Ki mink waim.	Ki minik wanāwao	May lee ta la-	Hool tell.
They drink	Minikway wog.	Minikway wok	May atta	He el tell.
I want to drink	Ni we miniquay	Ni we miniquan	O ghoz to	Oz ta in is tan.
Drink	Minik quaine	Minik quay	Llhad ho	Ned ha.
Eat	Wiss in	Mee tisso	In tzits	Zinhud lied.
Sleep	Ni bān	Ni ba	Njuz ti ay	Dthin ghee.
Go away	Eko kān	Awiss tay	E yow é tshay	E you issay.
Come here	Undass is han	Ass-tum	Tee ad zay	E youk uz ay.
Tell him	Win da ma o	Wi da ma o	Tee ay tin day	Hal in nee.
Trade	Atāwaine	Ataway	Tee ay gho tsho	Na il nee.
Whence do you come?	Andé wentchipai an.	Tanté way to tay.	Tee ay ghay dzin aghon dee ay	Ed luzeet gho adzee an adee.
Where are you going?	Andé aish āe an	Tanté ay to tay an	Tee ay ghay de āza	Ed luzeet hee hee ya.
Be quick	Wee weep é tan	Kee-ee pee	Dzag ghay	Ee-gha.
I shoot	Ni bas giss é gay	Ni bas giss é gan	A jes tee o	A yous kay.
Thou shootest	Ki bas giss é gay	Ki bas giss é gan	A tee tshe etsh	Ahil kay.
He shoots	Bās giss e gay	Bas giss e gay-o	Agha tee et yetsh	Ahil guth.
We shoot	Ni bas gisse gay min	Ni bas gisse gān an	Ateed yetsh	Ahel keeth.

ENGLISH.	SAUTEU, or OGIBOIS.	CREE.	BEAVER INDIAN.	CHIPPEWAYAN.
Ye shoot . . .	Ki bas gisse game .	Ki bas giss é gan ā wao	Atad yetsh	Er. ool keeth.
They shoot . .	Bās gisse gay wog .	Bas giss é gay wog	Aza du ghad yetsh .	Tay ar el keeth.
A Gun	Bās gisse gan . . .	Bas giss é gan . . .	Tié yaz o o	Tel git hay.
Powder . . .	Makatay	Kas. ki tay o . . .	Al aizay	Tel ge gonna.
Shot	She shep ass nin . .	Nisk ass in ee a . .	Noo tay ad-o o . .	Telt hay.
Give me . . .	Meesh ish in . . .	Mee an	Tee yay	Daz ee.
I give you . . .	Ki mee nin	Ki mee ni tin . . .	Nan uz lay	Na gha on in in nce.
Look	In ā bin	Etā bi	Ag gan eetha . . .	Ghon el lee.
Wait	Pee ton	Pay ho	Ad oog-a	Gad day.
Tobacco . . .	Na say ma	Na stay mao . . .	Aday ka yazé . . .	Sel tooe.
Pipe	Poagan	Os poagan	Tsee ay	Dthay.
Net	Assup	A he apee	Too me	Dtha bill.
Fish	Kee kō	Kee no shay o . . .	Tloo	Tloo-ay.
Flesh	Wee-ass	Wee ass	Ad zun	Berr.
River	See pé	See pé	Za ghay	Dāz.
Lake	Sa ka i gan	Sa ka i gan	Meet hay	Nad hoo al ta.
Water	Nee pee	Nee pee	Too	Too.
Summer . . .	Nee been	Nee been	Ad o lay	Seen nay.
Winter	Pay poon	Pay pun	Ealk hay ay	Ghā e yay.
Spring	See goan	Me as gamin . . .	Do o	Tloo guth.
Autumn . . .	Tag wā gin	Tag wā gin	Edoo aidlosin . . .	Ghao ud azay.

THE END.

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